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ERASMI ROTERODAMI

ENCOMIUM MORIAE I. E. STULTITIAE LAUS

PRAISE OF FOLLY

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ENCOMIUM MORIAE

I. E. STULTITIAE LAUS

PRAISE OF FOLLY

PUBLISHED AT BASLE IN 1515

AND DECORATED WITH THE MARGINAL DRAWINGS OF

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

NOW REPRODUCED IN FACSIMILE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

HEINRICH ALFRED SCHMID

TRANSLATED BY

HELEN H. TANZER

1 9 3 1

HENNING OPPERMANN BASLE

TO MY WIFE

IN RECOGNITION OF HER UNFAILING ASSISTANCE

PREFACE

In the years which preceded Luther's appearance, the most influential intellect among the men of learning north of the Alps was Erasmus of Rotterdam, and his most brilliant work, which he never surpassed, was his *Praise of Folly*. It is a coincidence which has always been regarded as significant that a copy of the early edition of 1515, prepared by the King of Humanists and by John Froben, the King of Printers, should have fallen into the hands of an equally great artist while he was a young apprentice, to be decorated by his clever and humorous drawings. This precious volume became the property of the City of Basle in the seventeenth century as a part of the Amerbach Collection and is now one of the most valued treasures in the public art collections of that city. An edition of the text and of the drawings – the latter very inadequately reproduced – was prepared as early as 1676 by Charles Patin. Other reproductions followed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though none completely satisfactory in every requirement. Furthermore, the authenticity of some of Holbein's most spirited drawings has lately been disputed. Both of these circumstances furnish reason enough for an edition which should give in text as well as in illustration a faithful representation of this unique work of art. The excellent reproductions for the present edition by the Artistisches Institut Orell Füssli of Zurich prove that the publisher has spared no pains.

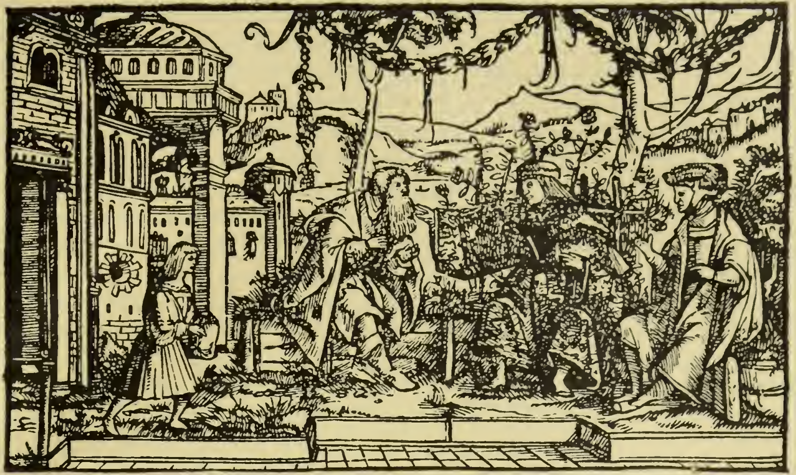
A short account of the author, the artist and the first owner will be welcomed by any one who does not care to devote himself to a detailed study of those times and the great men of that day.

In addition to the Bibliography noted at the end, the Editor acknowledges his indebtedness for information and for the elucidation of particular points to the kind generosity of several scholars; for effective cooperation to Dr. Margrit Burkhalter of Basle, and especially for assistance in philological matters to Dr. Bernhard Wyss, also of Basle. And, finally, he cannot allow this occasion to go by without expressing his thanks as well as those of the publisher to Mr. Hans Vollenweider of the Artistisches Institut Orell Füssli. Whatever degree of perfection we have attained in technical matters in this publication we owe to his expert attention to all the details and his untiring care in supervision.

Basle, April, 1931.

H. A. Schmid.

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Ambrose Holbein — Woodcut from the Basle edition of Utopia, J. Froben, 1518

I. ERASMUS AND THOMAS MORE

The *Praise of Folly*, which Erasmus always referred to as *Encomion Moriæ* and his friends called simply *Moria*, is a satire by a scholar who had already won a European reputation, but who had suffered more than others from the unreasonableness of his fellow men. Now at the very moment when his future seemed assured and he was anticipating a reunion with dear friends, he has his little joke at the folly of the world and of himself.

The idea for this work came to Erasmus on his journey from Italy to England early in the summer of 1509 as he rode over the Brenner Pass to take ship at Strassburg. It was a moment of release from pressing care for the future and for his still unpublished works. The mountains and the sight of awe-inspiring scenery may have been instrumental – all unknown to the author – in making him regard the trivial struggles of daily life from the comic side.

Erasmus had reached forty when the hour of his deliverance seemed to strike, and he was filled with a bitter memory of his early years. For after a struggle with the abnormal conditions of his immediate environment he found himself confronted with the state of affairs existing at the close of the Middle Ages, and the private sorrows which he had to endure under the unstable conditions of his times are reflected in his Moria.

His father and his mother had loved, had remained faithful to each other and had provided for their children, and they were besides clearly spiritually equals, but they could not marry because his father had become a priest; and though at

that time there was much amusement at Rome because of the many illegitimate children of Pope Innocent III, and though later Cesare Borgia, the son of Alexander VI, could commit any sort of crime with impunity, still the stain of illegitimate birth weighed heavily on Erasmus and on his older brother. The year of his birth was shrouded in mystery so that even to-day it is not positively established. The old evidence is mutually contradictory, but 1469 or 1466 is commonly taken to be correct. Judging by the portraits of him by Holbein, 1464 would be still better, and there are several statements, some by Erasmus himself, which would seem to prove this correct. Perhaps there were details about his birth which he learned only in the course of time.

The parents sent their two gifted sons to the famous school at Deventer. But even here the method of instruction was still so absurd and barbarous that the impression made on Erasmus, whose temperament was by no means robust, is the one to which he gives expression in his characterization of the schoolmasters. But the children's stay in Deventer was prematurely terminated by the death of their mother, who had taken up her residence there in order to be near her sons, and was carried off by the plague. The terrors of this pestilence seem to have left a deep impression on the mind of the boy, for later, in his adult life, Erasmus always exhibited an abnormal dread of epidemics.

The father's death occurred soon after that of the mother, and so the two boys were placed under the care of guardians who had but scant respect for higher learning, and certainly none for extraordinary gifts nor even for a new system of thinking like humanism which was just then at its beginning. Thus the young Erasmus found himself in an environment which then as well as later was bound to wound him, though unintentionally.

In 1488 Erasmus entered the monastery of Steyn of the Canonical Augustine monks at Gouda, a step which he ascribes to the influence of his guardians and pressure from a friend. While he found friends here and the opportunity to devote himself to the study of his beloved ancient authors and the new humanists, his passion for freedom soon made monastic life a torment. Indeed, even a quarter of a century later, when he stood at the height of his fame, and after many dispensations had been granted to him, he developed the greatest zeal in his efforts to free himself from the ties that bound him to the monastery.

His knowledge of Latin was of the greatest value to him. It was to the mastery of this language that most of his later success was due, for while his command of the tongues of the countries in which he lived from time to time was often precarious, he always arrived immediately at an excellent understanding with scholars of all nationalities.

In 1492 he was ordained as a priest and a year later he obtained the position of secretary to the Bishop of Cambrai, Heinrich von Bergen, who had just become Chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece, and thus held the highest ecclesiastical honor at the court of Burgundy. Most men would have found advantages and honors in the service of a personage such as his new master was, but Erasmus, filled only with a passionate hunger for learning, soon complains that he has even less opportunity than before to pursue his studies. Two years later his long cherished desire to be allowed to visit a university was fulfilled and he entered the University of Paris on a fellowship from his Bishop. This university was at that

time the seat of waning scholasticism, though humanism as well as the so-called *Devotio Moderna* were also represented. The latter was a pietistic movement that had come out of Holland which endeavored to attain a deepening of the religious life. The most important representative of this group in Paris was Jan Standonck of Mechlin, a passionate ascetic who was the director of an institution, Collège Montaigu, where poor students might find shelter, though under the strictest discipline. It was to this terrible creature that Erasmus brought introductions. He could however not endure the hardships of this way of living but soon became ill; indeed he ascribed his later ill health to the bad ventilation and the tainted food at this school. Much as he admired Saint Jerome, he did not share the latter's leaning toward asceticism, since he probably had his fill of it at this period.

When later he continued his studies outside of this institution he found it necessary to eke out his living by giving private lessons and by addressing flattering dedications to wealthy patrons, a practise which developed into a most undignified form of slavery.

The sophistries of the scholasticism which was so powerful in Paris at that time also repelled Erasmus. For he was no more qualified to penetrate very far into philosophical speculation than say a man like Jacob Burckhardt would have been. For the later development of this system of philosophy he conceived a deep seated aversion which is also expressed in his Praise of Folly. The barbarism of their speech excited his derision. "Scotist" was henceforth one of his strongest abusive epithets. The founder of this school, the Scottish Franciscan monk John Duns Scotus – † 1308 in Paris – was by no means an insignificant figure, but was, next to Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus the most distinguished thinker in the heyday of scholasticism.

Erasmus brought a letter of recommendation to the head of the Paris humanists, Robert Gaguin, and furthermore introduced himself with a poem. His acquaintance with this man brought the name of Erasmus before the public for the first time. For Gaguin had just completed his first attempt at a history of humanism in France and Erasmus added a eulogy at the end of the volume, filled with praise of the author, the book and the country, the brilliant style of which attracted the attention of wider circles.

In the meantime his relations with the Bishop of Cambrai had grown to be more difficult, and if Erasmus takes occasion in the Praise of Folly to criticize those who use the labors of their subordinates for their own glory he is obviously referring to patrons of this kind or to the Bishop himself. Of the greatest future importance for Erasmus was a pupil of high rank, William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, later tutor to Henry VIII, at whose suggestion and invitation Erasmus visited England in 1499. The grand scale of life in England he found uncommonly delightful, and in the course of his visit he made the acquaintance of prominent men who became of great importance to him, chief among them John Colet. The latter was about the same age as Erasmus and was at that time engaged in lecturing at the University of Oxford on the Epistles of Paul the Apostle, without however possessing a degree in theology. Principally through him, it would appear, the life of Erasmus received a new direction. The monk and priest now became a theological student. Till now he had considered himself a poet and man of letters.

Erasmus also made the acquaintance of young Thomas More who, though only twenty-two years old at this time – he was born in 1482 – undoubtedly made an immediate impression on the older scholar. It was to him that Erasmus dedicated his Moria a decade later.

Thomas More is to-day honored by the Catholic Church as a martyr and venerated almost as a saint because he steadfastly refused to recognize on oath the Act of Supremacy by which King Henry VIII was declared to be the supreme head of the Church in England in place of the Pope and was therefore thrown into prison by the King on a charge of constructive treason and was finally beheaded. He is however also characterized as the first communist because of his Utopia which appeared in 1516 and was reprinted in 1518 in Basle. In this book, More, like Erasmus before him in the Moria, criticized conditions of his day, especially the new doctrine of absolutism which was beginning to make headway in France and especially in England. He conceived an ideal in the form of a sensibly governed island, called Utopia. The book belongs to that class of writings which like *The Prince* of Machiavelli, which was published contemporaneously, were intended to influence and instruct the rulers of the world of that day.

The name of the island and of the book itself has grown to be proverbial for plans for the future that are unattainable and injudicious. But it is almost incredible how many of the desires expressed or suggested by More were fulfilled sooner or later or are even yet being seriously considered. Among them are the following: religious liberty, liberty of conscience, abolition of sacerdotal celibacy, suppression of auricular confession and of the veneration of images, selection of priests by popular election, education of women, universal military training as preparation for defensive warfare, abolition of classes and of politics, or at least of political intrigues. More however imagined all these conditions as brought about not by universal suffrage, but by the most autocratic monarch.

The reputation which he gained from this book was the reason, in addition to his great talents as a statesman, why Henry VIII summoned More to his court in 1518 and entrusted him with high offices, finally, in 1529, making him the first minister of his realm. But this honor sealed his death warrant, because of his conscience, as he himself foresaw. But, unlike Erasmus, he never was forced to endure the slavery of degrading dependence, and mounted the scaffold unbowed and unbroken, with a jest on his lips, as so many of the nobility did in the French Revolution.

However, in 1509, when Erasmus dedicated the Moria to him, this tragedy had not yet begun.

From the time of his first visit to England, Erasmus was filled with the desire to improve his Greek and to edit the Church Father Jerome. But six restless years followed, in Paris, in Orleans, in Louvain and again in Paris which were especially hard to bear because he was constantly hampered in his scholarly pursuits by the necessity of earning money. But it was the need for money that made him publish the book which was destined to establish his reputation throughout the civilized world. Not long after he arrived in Paris – in 1500 – John Philippi published the first edition of the Adagiorum Collectanea, a collection of proverbial expressions from Latin authors. In the Adagia Erasmus reproduced not only the form of Classical Latin, as he set out to do, but actually the very spirit of the Greeks

and the Romans, and thus introduced Classical learning to a far wider circle than had hitherto boasted an acquaintance with humanistic culture. Countless new editions followed the first, sixty during Erasmus' lifetime, all revised and enlarged by the addition of new quotations. The first edition contained 818 maxims and the last, which appeared in the last year of his life, over 4,000. Many authors of that day and later, including Shakespeare and Montaigne, drew from this inexhaustible source.

While visiting Louvain in the summer of 1504 Erasmus came across a MS of Lorenzo Valla's, the Annotationes on the New Testament, in the library of the Premonstratensian monastery near-by. This directed his efforts to one of his greatest achievements, an edition of the Greek New Testament. Lorenzo Valla (1407–57), a champion of humanism in Italy, was Papal secretary and a canon when he died in Rome in 1457, yet one of his greatest services was proving that the supposed Deed of Gift of the Emperor Constantine the Great to Pope Sylvester was a forgery. This document was the evidence on which the Holy See principally rested its claim to the secular dominion over the western world.

Erasmus had the Annotationes to the New Testament printed in Paris by December 1504. His work on Constantine's Deed of Gift was published by Ulrich von Hutten.

In the fall of 1506 Erasmus returned to England, where he had hopes of obtaining a benefice. But something happened that was to be of even greater importance to him – he received a commission in 1506 which made it possible for him to go to Italy. The physician in ordinary to King Henry VII was sending his two sons to Bologna to study, and wished Erasmus to supervise them. They travelled by way of Paris and Turin. The party was delayed by the wars of Julius II, and in November Erasmus was a witness of the triumphal entry of the Holy Father into the conquered city of Bologna, events which above all appear to have been the cause of his passionate condemnation of the war.

In October of the following year Erasmus' duties toward his two protégés came to an end, and he was free to go to Venice. The chief attraction was the famous printer Aldus Manutius, who was later the model for his future friend Froben in Basle. In Venice Erasmus spent a year in a stimulating circle and prepared a new edition of the Adagia for publication, now enlarged by quotations from Greek authors. At the close of 1508 he accepted a position as tutor to the natural son of James IV of Scotland, the youthful archbishop of St. Andrews, Alexander Stewart, who was a student at Padua and who fell in the battle of Flodden beside his royal father when the Scotch troops attacked England in 1513. This position finally obtained for Erasmus the opportunity of going to Rome.

In a letter dated February 8, 1512, addressed to the Breton Cardinal, Robert Guibé (Allen I., No. 253) he writes that he cannot remember without pain all that he carelessly left behind him in Rome: the sky, the fields (quod cœlum, quos agros), the libraries and the colonnades (quas bibliothecas, quas ambulationes). Erasmus was here referring, as the context reveals, not to promenades in the open air, but in the cloisters which decorate the monasteries and the palaces. The conversations with scholars, he goes on, the intellectual leaders (lumina mundi), the joys, the hopes. But not a word about the ancient monuments. There is hardly a word of admiration for the art of those days or of the newly discovered antiquities. Of

course the ceiling of the Sixtine chapel and Raffael's paintings had only just been begun when Erasmus left Rome, and Giorgione and Titian were still beginners. Still his silence is curious in view of the fact that Erasmus himself painted in his youth and that in the Moria he characterizes beauty as the most glorious gift of the gods.

Among the cardinals and prelates who treated him with distinction we note especially Giovanni Medici, later Pope Leo X, and Cardinal Domenico Grimani, who, according to Erasmus, tried to detain him in Rome.

But he tore himself away, for he had great hopes of a monarch brought up by the humanists and trained by them, hopes shared by other humanists, including the Italians. For news came to Rome that Henry VIII had ascended the throne of England and at the same time pressing invitations came to Erasmus from his friends begging him to settle in England as they believed that the most glorious future was assured to him under the new ruler. So Erasmus decided to take the journey which was destined at least to be the occasion for his most brilliant piece of work. Archbishop Warham of Canterbury and Lord Mountjoy sent him a considerable sum of money for his travelling expenses.

Though he had had to learn in those bitter years that human affairs settle themselves illogically and senselessly, he could now laugh at the checkered game the Powers assign us and judge the wise man to be the fool. This is what he makes the goddess of folly do, just as Goethe makes Mephistopheles advise the scholar to stick to words and nothing more. Except that Moria is not the personification of evil but is more like the comic mask who plays Prologue on the stage. Her domain is everything illogical, on the one hand the hallucinations of harmless lunatics, the spleen of the half-crazed and the jests of wags, as well as the narrow-minded judgment of the great middle class who follow their natural desires, passions and prejudices; and on the other hand the spirit of self sacrifice of artists and heroes, and the religious ecstasy of the devout on earth and of the saints in Heaven. The wise man is introduced by way of contrast, for while he possesses deeper insight and cooler judgment he could never rule the world and takes only harm from his cleverness. Especially so the scholar, though not the philosopher of antiquity, above all Erasmus himself.

The fact that Erasmus wrote the Moria for More and dedicated it to him may have had a deeper significance. For More, who had been elected to Parliament when only twenty-six years old, had shortly before won a victory over Henry VII, the miserly father of Henry VIII by succeeding in making Parliament vote to refuse unauthorized demands for money, and now every one hoped for the best from Henry VIII, the pupil of a humanist. Erasmus might well regard More as the true antithesis to Moria, so successfully master of his fate and so highly educated a statesman, though More was later to pay a higher price for his philosophy than Erasmus did for his.

Erasmus was no more blind to the dark side of the Church of Rome than was Luther, who arrived in Rome two years later. But it is remarkable that neither of them received the impression that gave power to Erasmus' criticisms from the shameful acts of an Alexander VI and of his son Cesare Borgia but rather from the state of affairs – far less wicked – which existed under Julius II. But according to Jacob Burckhardt Julius was the savior of the papacy and furthermore, as is

well known, he conferred a brilliance on the Church of Rome by his artistic taste such as no other pope did in the two thousand years of her existence. It is true that Julius II saved the papacy not by his holy life but by his talents as a statesman, which though not precisely Christian were yet far superior to those of a Cesare Borgia. It was in criticism of the militarism of Julius II that Erasmus wrote his *Julius Exclusus*, in which the Pope tries in vain to enter the gate of Heaven. This pamphlet was distributed in manuscript form immediately after the death of the Pope in 1513 and was printed in Basle in 1518. The thing that repelled Erasmus at Rome – Luther also – though this is not expressed in the Moria, was the fashion of regarding it as good form at the papal court to make fun of the dogmas of their own church.

In the north the humanists of the end of the fifteenth century still took their religion and the church seriously. The greatest service of a Reuchlin was that he made the meaning of the Old Testament accessible by means of his Hebrew grammar. Erasmus regarded it as his life's work to edit the Greek New Testament and St. Jerome. He constantly emphasizes the philosophy of Christ, that is the Christianity of Christ, and above all the ethics of Christ, though there was no trace of the latter at the court of Julius II. A Swiss humanist like Glareanus admits in a letter to Zwingli that Erasmus had led him and others to love Christ. There is however a point at which the author of the Moria stops short in his criticism, as is also the case with all the prominent humanists, even those who are not Italian. He wished to improve the method of administering the church offices and by no means desired to stir up a revolution against their constitution. Some of the humanists were really concerned to maintain harmony between the Church and western Christianity, and others, among them Erasmus, felt anxiety for western civilization. If Erasmus feared that "studies" would decline at Luther's approach, his anxiety was certainly not alone for his special field.

While the question of salvation was of vital importance for Luther as well as for Augustine and for Paul, it appeared to Erasmus to be quite negligible, as witness the remarkable ending of the Moria. It seems unfortunate that he looked to Leo X to reform the Church, for it was his alleged sale of indulgences that was destined to develop into a mockery of Christendom, so anxious for salvation, and to become the last impetus to apostasy from the Church. Thus Erasmus fared about as badly as his friend More in regard to their expectations, except that Erasmus was not condemned to death by Pope Leo X or by one of his successors.

The Church of Rome never had a pope filled with religious fervor and a sense of duty such as Erasmus presents in the Moria as natural and sensible until the time of Pius V, under whom the Inquisition, which Erasmus and Holbein had ridiculed with impunity, again raged. And only the Lutherans and the Calvinists introduced any of the innovations depicted by Thomas More in his imaginary state, and only a very small number of them: the introduction of iconoclasm, the abrogation of compulsory confession, the abolition of sacerdotal celibacy and the selection of priests by popular election. Furthermore, the schism within the Church which was dreaded by so many of the best men of that time, was to lead to the beginning of religious liberty.

The first draft of the book was written in a few days early in the summer of 1509, at the city house of Thomas More, immediately upon the arrival of Erasmus

in England, and while the author waited for the boxes containing his books to arrive.

About two years later, in the spring of 1511, Erasmus journeyed to Paris to have his manuscript printed by Gilles Gourmont. This first impression is undated except that the dedication bears the date of June 9, 1511. The book was reprinted in August of the same year and again in October 1512 in Strassburg. Altogether forty editions appeared during the lifetime of Erasmus.

This witty satire caused a great sensation. Every one read the book and talked about it or wrote about it. From now on the author's international fame was assured. His editions of Jerome and of the Bible held a place among the scholarly works of subsequent centuries; his manuals on rhetoric and his collection of proverbs and maxims no longer have any great importance; but this subjective analysis by a lucid thinker of the absurdity of the universe and of his own day will continue to amuse us for a long time to come, just as we enjoy the battles of the wily Ulysses with monsters and with giants, with winds and with waves although we are no longer threatened by the same perils.

Erasmus returned to England in the summer of 1511, and obtained a professorship in theology at Queen's College, Cambridge, through the good offices of Archbishop Warham, one of his stanchest supporters. He lived and taught here for about two years. After peace was concluded between England and France Erasmus betook himself to Basle, where he arrived toward the end of August 1514 and was received by the humanists with acclaim. During this first visit, which lasted to the spring of 1516 his editions of the New Testament and of Jerome, which had been ready for a long time, were published by Froben, who also made a reprint of the Moria at this time. In the spring of 1515 the Basle edition appeared with a commentary which was usually reprinted along with the text of Erasmus in subsequent editions, and which originated with Gerhard Lister.

Lister's existence was doubted at one time, though quite without foundation, as Patin states in the preface to his edition of the Moria in 1676. Lister came from the province of Utrecht. He arrived in Basle a little earlier than Erasmus, and as proofreader in Froben's printing establishment he supervised the reprint of the Adagia. He left Basle again in 1516 as did also Myconius and Erasmus, and became Rector of the famous school at Zwolle. The commentary was begun by Erasmus, as we now know, and probably also supervised by him. He may therefore be considered responsible for the interpretations.

Hans Holbein the Younger as a travelling journeyman also made his first visit to Basle shortly after the arrival of Erasmus; we have positive proof that he was in Basle in the summer of 1515. About the beginning of 1516 he decorated a copy of the first Basle edition of the Moria, the property of a schoolmaster of Basle, Oswald Myconius otherwise known as Molitor. It is this copy of the Moria that we reproduce here.

In the spring of 1516 Erasmus returned to the Netherlands, during the summer he made a short trip to England where he again saw Colet and Warham while visiting More and definitely severed his connection with the monastic order. He was now at the height of his fame. From 1517 to 1521 he remained in Louvain. In May 1518 he returned to Basle for a short time to publish his second edition of the New Testament. On the return journey to Louvain he was stricken with a



Hans Holbein the Younger

Myconius teaching writing
From the sign of his school, Basle Gallery

severe illness which was at first believed to be the plague. But in October 1521 he found a permanent abode in Basle which he had grown to care for at the time of his first visit.

At first Froben prepared quarters for him in the house known as "the Chair" (zum Sessel) at the Nadelberg near St. Peter's Church. The house where he died is on Bäumleingasse and was called "zum Luft." This was his home after his return to Basle from Freiburg in 1535.

In the years following his return to Basle Erasmus was frequently immortalized by Holbein in paintings, while constantly new books, new editions and new reprints of his works went out to the world, all embellished with decorations by Holbein. Three portraits dating back to 1523 are preserved in Basle, in Paris, and in Longford Castle. One picture presenting Erasmus with Froben exists which possibly antedates these three. Froben's likeness is probably preserved in a portrait in Hampton Court which has lately been discovered under another superimposed painting, which, it was found, had been mutilated at an earlier date.

After 1528 more portraits followed, preserved to us only in copies, one painting about 1531 now in private ownership in Switzerland which must be characterized as a good piece of studio work; and about 1532 the famous little round picture in the Basle Museum.

At Christmas time 1526 after his arrival in England Holbein produced a magnificent portrait group of Thomas More and his family which might easily have been a landmark in the development of portraiture. It was however left unfinished though it is probably preserved in the painting now in Nostel Priory which was finished by another hand. The charming studies for this group in Windsor are perhaps better known as well as a small pen-and-ink copy in the Basle Museum, which Holbein drew for Erasmus.

Holbein did not care for More, perhaps he did not understand him. But More's father and his beautiful daughters are obviously presented with a much more sympathetic touch. The artist did not return to London until More had renounced his offices.

After 1521, during the period of recognition and of security, Erasmus was withdrawn from the quarrels of his time. These were the first critical years of the Reformation and they had developed in a different direction from the one the great humanist would have wished. After the movement had burst forth in Basle in the spring of 1529 Erasmus settled in Freiburg in the Breisgau as did also his friend Glareanus, whom we shall mention again. But he returned again in 1535 and in the house "zum Luft" he passed to his eternal rest on July 12, 1536. He lies buried in the Cathedral at Basle.



Portrait of Myconius by J. H. Schönauer

II. MYCONIUS AND THE VICISSITUDES OF HIS BOOK

The book that was to become famous through Holbein's drawings belonged first to a man who designates himself on the title page thus: "Est Oswaldi Molitoris Lucerni" (property of Oswald, the Miller's son, of Lucerne). He was at that time still in very moderate circumstances, but in all the positions that he filled he showed himself an excellent teacher, and the autobiography of his pupil Thomas Platter presents a very graphic picture of his educational work. Myconius however played an important part in the history of the Swiss Reformation as well as in the life of Holbein, and was at his death prelate (Antistes) of the church at Basle.

He came originally from Lucerne where he was born in 1488 of humble though not indigent middle class people. His father was probably a miller, since the son adopted the Latin Molitor(is) (Molitor, miller; Molitoris, Miller's son, Millerson) as a cognomen. His name was originally Geisshüsler, and he was registered at the University of Basle as Oswaldus Molitoris Lucernensis ultimo Maii. The note in his famous book, where he likewise uses this name probably dates from 1515 or 1516. The Greek name Myconius, which it is said Erasmus gave him, appears after 1517. There is however no foundation for the conjecture that the name is a pun on Geisshüsler in the Greek word *μηκάομαι* (to bleat). It is much more likely that Erasmus called the learned schoolmaster by this name

because of his baldness (cf. Adagia, Leyden Edition, Vol. II, No. 1007). Allen (Vol. III, p. 382) is of the same opinion. In the pictures supposed to represent Myconius he always appears with his head covered, in the later pictures he also wears a beard.

In his boyhood Myconius moved to the Swabian city of Rottweil, an ally of the Swiss Confederacy, to the house of Michael Rubellus, the director of a famous Latin school, who had also attracted other Swiss pupils destined to distinguish themselves, among them Berchtold Haller, the reformer of Berne, and the poet and humanist Heinrich Loriti, known as Glareanus. In May 1510 at the age of twenty-two he matriculated at the University of Basle. Here he dedicated himself primarily to the study of the ancient authors and his ability soon attracted attention. From the very beginning he probably had to maintain himself by giving private lessons, as was also the case with his friend Glareanus, though the latter was much better off than Myconius.

Glareanus came to Basle early in 1514 as Poeta Laureatus, that is, one of the poets crowned by the Emperor Maximilian in Cologne, and created a stir by his conceit and by the mad pranks he played. Because he considered that the place assigned him at the public disputations was not worthy of a poet laureate he arrived at the next meeting riding a horse to the hall of the Superior College of Preceptors, in order to have a suitable seat. But this created such an uproar that the session had to be abandoned. Myconius has a reference to this incident in a marginal note on page 59 (H 2) of his copy of the Moria. Beatus Rhenanus also mentions it. But in spite of everything Glareanus was very highly thought of even by Erasmus.

Myconius however never made any such exhibition of himself, but was introduced into the circle of Erasmus by Glareanus. He remained in Basle till 1516 and during that time the authorities offered him two or perhaps three positions as instructor. At any rate, he held an appointment first at St. Theodore's school and later at St. Peter's. The latter was only a few steps away from the house in which Froben had fitted up rooms for Erasmus on his first visit in 1515–16. We know that Myconius was married at the beginning of this period, as in 1522 his son Felix was no longer a child. We may also assume that Myconius and his first wife are represented on the sign of the school dated 1516 which is now a part of the Amerbach bequest in the Basle gallery. Unfortunately it is impossible to prove this by comparison with the other portraits of him. The two paintings in the hall of the University of Basle (in the Museum building), and in the administration rooms of the church at Basle (Bischofshof), date from the later baroque period and present no characteristic features in the narrower sense of the word. Nor can the woodcut closest to Myconius' time in the *Prosopographia Heroum Atque Illustrium Virorum Totius Germaniæ* by Heinrich Pantaleon, Basle, Nicolas Brylinger, 1565, be regarded as evidence. There is however an engraving by Jakob Heinrich Schönauer dating from the 17th century in which the somewhat unusual curve of his nose gives him a thoroughly characteristic appearance that is extraordinarily like Holbein's representation of him. (Cf. illustrations pp. 9 and 11.)

For a few years preceding the Reformation (1516–19) Myconius was a teacher at the cathedral school at Zurich and so assisted Zwingli in preparing the ground.

Soon after the latter's entry Myconius was called to the cathedral school at Lucerne. But he was dismissed again as being a supporter of Zwingli (1522) and appointed in Zurich at the Fraumünster school, and during the decisive years from 1522 to 1531 he was a faithful comrade to the reformer. In 1531, when Zwingli had fallen at Kappel and the Basle reformer Oecolampad had died soon after, Myconius became antistes (prelate) of the church at Basle in his place where he aroused great enmity until his death in 1552 but, actuated by a lofty sense of his responsibility, he labored much for his church at a time of great difficulty for the new Protestantism.

He was a man who, though exhibiting no originality himself, possessed a sure talent for recognizing ability in others and proved himself a true friend to his friends. It was Myconius who, in January 1516, stimulated this first production of Holbein's as it was also he who introduced him to Erasmus and to Froben; Holbein's connection with the publisher dates from the fall of 1516. In the spring of 1517 Holbein was engaged in executing his first large commission in Myconius' native city. It is not unlikely that Myconius had a hand in this also. During his first visit to Zurich he wrote his commentary on his friend Glareanus' poem on the (Swiss) Confederacy. It is also probable that it was directly due to his efforts that Zwingli was invited and he was thus a decisive factor in the Swiss Reformation.

The only question that remains is why Holbein decorated this copy of the Moria for the schoolmaster. The attractive suggestion that the volume was intended as a present for the author has already been made. But this supposition is contradicted by the notes written by the first owner, Myconius. For these notes, as can be proved in every case, were for the most part interspersed among Holbein's drawings and consist of explanations and comments which could not have been intended to elucidate his own book to Erasmus. It is more probable that they were notes by Myconius for a lecture on the Moria. In the letters written at a later date by the artist Jacob Clauser to Basilius Amerbach in the course of negotiations connected with the purchase of this treasure for the Amerbach art collection, we find this curious passage: "Meconius ... sols uff ein zÿtt offenlich glesen han" (Myconius is said to have lectured on it). Cf. below p. 74. So we see that it was still a tradition in 1578 that Myconius lectured in Basle on the Moria. Again, John Watson, writing to Erasmus on August 13, 1516, says that it is astonishing to note the extent to which the Moria is regarded as the fountain of wisdom (Allen, Vol. II, p. 314, No. 450), and Wolfgang Capito on September 2, 1516, writes that Erasmus and his works are considered as the cornerstone of the education of youth (Allen, Vol. II, p. 334, No. 459). Especially the first rather long Annotatio, beside the dedication, facsimile, A 2, is nothing more than a short summary of the contents of the text beside it. Myconius also shows a particular interest in proverbs and adages which might have a good effect on the style of the pupils.

The drawings resulted quite spontaneously from conversations with the owner, and indeed it is more than probable that the artist sought acquaintance with Myconius as a means of being introduced to the literary activity destined to be so important for him. An analysis of the illustrations and of the manuscript notes scarcely admits of any other conclusion. Perhaps the Moria even served to induct the artist into the world of the humanists.

The later history of this precious volume is now known.[1] In 1552 Oswald Myconius died in Basle. But in 1557 a Jacob Myconius M. D. lived in Mülhausen in Elsass, whom Felix Platter, the son of Thomas Platter, mentions in his autobiography as one of the foreign guests who were present at his wedding. The younger Platter had met him when a medical student in Montpellier in May 1553, and often refers to him in the account of his life at the University of Montpellier. He always speaks of him as Jacobus Geishüsler (sic), called Myconius, "wil er Oswaldi Myconii filius adoptivus war" (because he was the adoptive son of Oswald Myconius). Another statement that an adoptive son, Jacob Myconius, died before the antistes in the latter's house is of course a mistake.

This physician Myconius in Mülhausen must have been the owner of our copy of the Moria and from him it came in 1578 into the possession of a Daniel Wieland, who is also mentioned by Felix Platter in 1557. Wieland was town clerk in Mülhausen from 1564 to 1575 and still lived there in 1578. At that time Basilius Amerbach was endeavoring to obtain the book from him, working through the painter Jacob Clauser. The latter, who was born in Zurich some time after 1520 and was active in Basle after 1547, had been called to Mülhausen and was engaged in decorating the façade of the town hall with frescoes in the summer of 1578, and died there at the end of that same year. After 1586 the gem of the Basle Kunstsammlung is listed in the inventory of the Amerbach Collection.

The letters of the artist to Basilius Amerbach concerning the negotiations with Wieland are interesting enough to reproduce here (see below pp. 73 ff.). From them it is evident that the reason for the purchase was the belief that the illustrations were the original work of Hans Holbein the Younger. Clauser endorses the opinion that the book contains many amusing drawings that are easy to recognize as the work of Holbein, but adds that somebody else had also "daubed it up." Cf. p. 74. Of course he never thought of Ambrosius nor mentioned anybody else by name.

In the inventory of the Amerbach Collection for 1586 the book is mentioned as being in the case where the smaller paintings and especially the graphic arts are kept, under the heading: "VI. H. Holbein, 104 genuine drawings, large and small"; with the additional remarks, "Erasmus' Moria with scattered illustrations. This book contains 85 sketches" (there are only 82 pen-and-ink drawings).

Furthermore, neither Charles Patin who was the first to reproduce the 82 drawings in 1676, nor Iselin, in his Historisch und Geographisches Lexikon, Basle 1726, mentions other artists who cooperated in the decoration of the Moria.

However, the remark made by Jacob Clauser is the first attempt to dispute the genuineness of a number of Holbein's drawings;[2] and though this painter was no genius, it is well known that mediocre artists usually judge superficially on questions of authenticity. The gallery at Basle contains a portrait of Boniface Amerbach as an old man painted by this same Clauser. The workmanship easily proves how inferior Clauser was as an artist to Holbein, on the one hand, who

[1] Thanks to the valuable labors of P. Ganz and E. Major, Die Entstehung des Amerbachschen Kunstkabinets, Jahresbericht der Öffentlichen Kunstsammlung (Neue Folge III, 1907).

[2] P. Ganz, Handzeichnungen schweizerischer Meister des XV.–XVII. Jahrhunderts, Basel 1904–1908, Vol. I, Text for Plate 52; Willy Hes, Ambrosius Holbein, Strassburg 1911; Konr. Escher, Die Miniaturen in den Basler Bibliotheken, Museen und Archiven, Basel 1917.

was twenty years older than he, and to Tobias Stimmer, on the other, who was about as much younger. His judgment on matters of art cannot be trusted. Unfortunately this opinion has passed over into the excellent biography of Erasmus by Preserved Smith, New York and London, 1923. It is an attractive theory, because of the great differences in the drawings, and three of the small sketches are certainly not by Hans Holbein, but for the rest it will not bear close inspection.

Since our reproductions are the first that deserve the name of facsimiles proof that the drawings are really Holbein's will be required. Even in the excellent woodcuts by Cassian Chr. Friedr. Knaus in the Paris edition of 1872 we can see neither what led some scholars to assume the work of several hands nor what forces us to refuse to accept this opinion. And the newer reproductions based on photographs are no more adequate.



Hans Holbein the Younger Wife of Myconius
From the sign of the school

III. THE TEXT AND ITS RELATION TO THE MARGINAL DRAWINGS

1. THE TITLE

AS a title for his Praise of Folly Erasmus himself chose the Latinized Greek name of Moriae Encomium, *ΜΩΡΙΑΣ ΕΓΚΩΜΙΟΝ*. But even in the first dated reprint of 1511, and also in this first reprint issued under his own supervision by Froben in Basle in 1515 the Latin translation *Stultitiae Laus* is added.

2. MYCONIUS' COPY

The copy of the Moria illustrated by Holbein is contained in a quarto volume, the usual size of the time, bound in pressed yellow leather decorated with the late Gothic ornaments characteristic of the beginning of the 16th century. The binding evidently dates from the time of the first owner, as numerous notes by him are found on the inside of the cover and on the empty leaves at the beginning and the end of the book; it may even date back to 1515.

The book is composed of two separate sets of articles, the second, the less important, dating from 1514, the first, the one that interests us, from 1515. Each part is composed of various essays; the first part contains not only Erasmus' famous satire, but also two articles by other authors.

The last fifty-two leaves of the volume combine a number of minor writings by Plutarch that were edited by Erasmus in August 1514, shortly after he arrived in Basle, and published by Froben. The leaves are numbered from 1–27 in Arabic numerals, and again from 1–25. The title page is embellished with a decorative border composed of three woodcuts and a narrow strip, which was probably engraved. The title reads as follows: Opuscula Plutarchi nuper traducta Erasmo Roterodamo interprete. Then follow the titles of the other works. The date of publication is added at the end, and this is probably the reason that the date of the Basle edition of the Encomium Moriæ is so often given as 1514.

The first part of the volume contains three different articles. The title is preceded by a blank leaf bearing manuscript notes by the first owner of the volume. The title page is decorated with the well known woodcut by Urs Graf showing the fool and the satyr framing the titles; which read as follows:

IN HOC OPERE CONTENTA

Ludus L. Annæi Senecæ, De morte Claudij Cæsaris, nuper in Germania repertus, cum Scholijs Beati Rhenani.

Synesius Cyrenensis de laudibus Caluitij, Ioanne Phrea Britanno interprete, cum scholijs Beati Rhenani.

Erasmi Roterodami Moriæ Encomium, cum commentarijs Gerardi Listrij, trium linguarum periti.
APVD INCLYTAM GERMANIAE BASILEAM.

At the lower margin beyond the Urs Graf woodcut we read in Myconius' hand: *Est osualdi Molitoris Lucerni.* Above, in the center, are the words *Ni caria sit.* The meaning of these words is not clear, but they are probably a wish or a charm to keep the book from being suppressed or perhaps taxed or confiscated.

The first essay is a satire by Seneca on the apotheosis of the Emperor Claudius; the second, The Praise of Baldness, also in joking vein, is by Synesius who died a bishop in Africa in 413, written while he was still a pagan. Both of these works are mentioned by Erasmus in his dedication as examples of the little jokes which the learned have always permitted themselves as relaxation. On the reverse of this title the dedication begins in the following words:

BEATVS RHENANVS THOMAE RAPPIO BADENSI, LIBERALIVM ARTIVM PROFESSORI, S. D. P.

This is dated:

Basileæ. Tertio Calendas Aprilias. An. M. D. XV.

At the end of the second article we have Froben's printer's mark and the date:

BASILEAE IN AEDIBUS IOANNIS FROBENII. MENSE MARTIO ANNO M. D. XV.
REGNANTE IMP. CAES. MAXIMILIANO P. F. AUGUSTO.

The first two essays comprise thirty-one printed leaves (sixty-two pages); then follows one blank leaf. The sequence of these leaves is marked, in contrast to those of the third essay, usually with letters, running from *a* to *h*. Then, on the next leaf (33) we have the title of the third article, the Encomium Moriæ, which we reproduce in facsimile page for page in the first volume of this publication.

This third and most important work and by far the longest in the first part of the volume is not dated anywhere, either indirectly by means of the date of the dedication, nor directly at the end of the text as was customary at that time. But since the dedication of the first article is dated in April, and the second one in March, then the third which is listed on the general title page cannot have appeared before the spring of 1515.

No pagination is found in the first part of this volume. It would thus appear that the whole volume might have been bought as well as the Praise of Folly alone. In this third essay the leaves are independently signatured from A to X. In our facsimile of the Moria, therefore, we attempt no pagination, in order that we may adhere to the original. In quotations and in references we use the signatures of the original, which may be found on almost every second page at the lower right-hand corner. The first page of the original as well as of our reproduction, is thus designated A, the second, A verso (Av), the third, A2, etc. On the seventh page we do not however

find A4, nor indeed B4, C4, etc. However, we use A4, B4, C4, and D4 in our quotations, and we also designate the reverse as A4 verso (A4 v), etc.

Any one who does not wish to follow the Latin may enjoy the old English translation newly edited by Mrs. P. S. Allen, in 1913, recommended by Preserved Smith: The Praise of Folly, written by Erasmus, 1509, Translated by J. Wilson, 1668.

There is also a brilliant translation into German by Alfred Hartmann, edited by Emil Major, Basle, 1929.

We may also recommend the French translation, *Eloge de la Folie d'Erasme*, traduit par Victor Develay et accompagné des dessins de Hans Holbein. Paris, Librairie des Bibliophiles, première édition 1872.

For a detailed study the edition of the text by I. B. Kan, The Hague 1898, with a commentary and with references to the original quotations is indispensable.

It is important, however, to have a note of the contents showing the passages to which the drawings refer; we therefore indicate in the margin where the pictures may be found in the facsimile.

3. THE CONTENTS, THE DRAWINGS AND THE NOTES

First comes the dedication by Erasmus to Thomas More. This corresponds to our modern preface and contains valuable information on the history of the satire, and was probably written shortly before the first edition of 1511, not however in 1509. This dedication fills six of the 168 quarto pages of our edition.

On page 9 we again have the Greek title, followed by the title in Latin and the subtitle: Declamatio (a rhetorical exercise) by Erasmus of Rotterdam. The orator is introduced with the words: *Stultitia loquitur* (Folly speaks). The comic effect of the discussion is heightened by the formal development of the declamation in true rhetorical style. The oration consists of an Exordium, in which Moria announces her theme; Part One, one might say the *Definition*, treats of the divinity of Folly; Part Two, the *Exposition*, in which the arguments are precisely corroborated by examples taken from the life of the times and from the writings of the day which were regarded as authoritative.

Accordingly we note the following scheme:

Title and two Dedications	A–A 4 v
Exordium	B–C v
Part One (Definition) (Divinitas Moriæ)	C v – M 2 v
The nature of this divinity and the universal benefits conferred by Folly	C 2 – H 3 v
Survey of all those made blessed by this dear delusion	H 3 v – M 2 v
Part Two (Exposition) Examples from life and from literature	M 2 v – X 4

INTRODUCTION

Folly mounts the pulpit and asserts that it is due to her and to her alone that gods and men are happy and merry. She promises her audience that she will improve on the new sophists who teach the young to dispute and to quarrel. She will instead imitate the ancient sophists, the lovers of wisdom, and pronounce a eulogy on a worthy object – herself. Folly declares that she thus shows herself true to herself, while those who pretend to great wisdom in word and in bearing are betrayed like Midas by their asses' ears. Her father was Pluto the only true father of men and of gods her mother, Neotes (youth) the most charming of all the nymphs; nor was she born in the bonds of wedlock but is a child of love. She does not envy the illustrious son of Cronus the goat that suckled him (Amalthea), for her nurses were the two nymphs Methe (drunkenness) daughter of Bacchus and Apaidia (childlessness, but here ignorance) daughter of Pan. She presents her attendants: self-love (Philautia) and flattery (Kolakeia). Her cavaliers are Kômos and Hypnos, boisterousness (revelry) and laziness (sleep).

B
Fig. 1: Folly preaching to the multitude.
B 2
Fig. 2: The sophist walking on thorns (tribulations).
B 3
Fig. 3: Erasmus goes a-courting. (The wise man who turns to look at a pretty woman, walking into the market woman's egg basket.)
B 3 v
Fig. 4: Portrait of Midas.
C v
Fig. 5: The two nurses.

PART ONE. THE DIVINE QUALITY OF FOLLY
(*Divinitas Moriæ*)

The greatest proof of divinity is to do good to mortals, as one man cleverly said (Pliny, Hist. Naturalis II, 5); and if the gods admitted to their assembly those who taught man to use wine and grain why should not Moria be regarded as the most important among them all since she alone confers all sorts of benefits on gods and men?

Life itself depends on Folly. For Jupiter must lay aside his thunderbolts and his Titanic countenance if he wishes to become a father, and the Stoics must lower their haughty brows and give up their dogmas. Generation is impossible without folly, and not by means of the noblest part of man either. You owe your life to marriage, but marriage is due to her attendant Anoia (stupidity). It is not only life, however, that you have to thank Moria for, but everything delightful in life. The loveliest time of life when man pleases the whole world is childhood and youth, and the charm of these periods is folly. And folly spares age and makes the senile children again. If men would only dedicate themselves to her entirely they would always remain young. Fools are rotund and well cared for and the Brabanters, for example, of whom it is said that they grow foolisher as they

C 2 v
Fig. 6: A bearded dignitary seeking a maiden's favor.
C 3 v
Fig. 7: The goat Amalthea, suckling the boy Jupiter.[1]
C 4 v
Fig. 8: The Brabanter, a fool, relishing a sausage.

[1] This picture obviously belongs to the passage above, Facsimile, folio C below and C v above and should come before Fig. 5.

grow older, not wiser, know none of the afflictions of age. Folly alone can grant eternal youth. But she also enhances the charms of the gods and keeps them young as any one can see in Bacchus and in Venus. And even the most august among them delight in foolish tricks. For since Momus, the god of faultfinding was put out of Olympus together with Ate, the goddess of malicious mischief, they carry on worse than before. Silenus, Polyphemus, nymphs and satyrs dance and frolic and Pan obliges with a little song.

D v
Fig. 9: Bacchus in the grape arbor.

D 2 v
Fig. 10: Dance of Polyphemus with a satyr and Pan.[1]

Returning to earth we see that also here below no happiness is possible without the kind help of folly. For Nature with the help of Jupiter contrived when man was created to allow much more room for foolish activities than for intelligence. Then the father of men, on the advice of Moria, set the woman beside the man, a foolish and fascinating creature, superior to man in the game of luck who entices him to be childish whenever he wishes to enjoy the delights of love.

D 4
Fig. 11: The girl offering her breast to her lover.

Others, especially old men, prefer the pleasures of dining and wining, eating and drinking, though without women the most delightful part is lacking. But even then they must have a funny fellow among the guests or else a hired clown or some other nonsense. And if there is anybody who does not care for this kind of entertainment because, like the philosophers (Pythagoreans) he thinks that the most important thing in life is intercourse with friends, he needs folly as much as any one, for he could not manage without being tolerant and forgiving. And this ridiculous partiality for the shortcomings of friends and of blood relations and of favorites will keep society welded together to the end of time.

E 2
Fig. 12: A man with cock's feathers in his cap, listening to a cuckoo.

This is even truer of marriage. For without flattery, charity, self-deception and dissimulation there would be no marriages. Few people would stick together if the husband were not trusting or stupid. Without Folly companionship is disagreeable and of short duration. Could one person love and please another if he hated himself, and tormented himself and disciplined himself as is the tendency of the sensitive? Of what value is beauty, the most glorious gift of the gods, if it is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought?" (putiditatis vitio). How could anybody please himself or anybody else if my dear Philautia (self-love) did not assist him? But on the one hand nothing shows more folly than for a man to admire himself.[2] But on the other hand how can any one accomplish anything without taking pleasure in his own success? Without conceit no orator would move an audience, nor musicians, actors, poets; even physicians would not be effective. Without it no one would dare great deeds and there would be no acts of heroism, which are the outcome of war. And what folly could be greater than war! But the philosopher dried up by the atmosphere of his study is of no use when the trumpets sound for action, nor in strategy, nor in politics either. If ever a philosopher was a good ruler, though despised

E 2 v
Fig. 13: The fool, admiring himself in a mirror.

[1] Pan is represented with stars on his breast, as e. g. in Signorelli's well known picture in the Berlin Museum. Cf. also the commentary of Servius on Vergil's Bucolics, II, 32, and the text of De Deorum Imaginibus Libellus, Cod. Regin. Lat. 1290, Bibl. Vat., edited by H. Liebeschütz in Studien der Bibl. Warburg VI, 1926.

[2] Myconius here quotes Ovid: Ex Ponto 1, 3, 35f.: I know not by what charm one's native soil leads men captive and never lets them grow unmindful of her.

by the masses, as was Marcus Aurelius, he did his country more harm through his son, Commodus, than he profited her by good works. And just as the wise are poor leaders of the people so they are of no use in daily life at banquets at the dance at the theater or in buying and selling.

E 4 v
Fig. 14: Marcus Aurelius with a child in a fool's dress.

The masses in ancient times were molded into nations and states by means of indirection. Later they were guided by fables as is proved by Lycurgus and Themistocles and the stories about the secession of the Roman plebeians and the hind of Sertorius and the farce about the horses' tails, not to mention the hoaxes practised by Minos and by Numa. It is only by such tricks that one can impress that haughty monster, the people. (Cf. *Belua multorum es capitum*. Horace, Ep. I. 1, 76.) What drove the Decii and Quintus Curtius (he means Marcus Curtius) to sacrifice themselves except a senseless desire for fame? What makes artists practise themselves in accomplishments and endure sleepless nights and painful labors?

F v
Fig. 15: The weak groom pulling the hairs singly out of the tail of the strong horse, and the vain attempt of the strong groom to pull the whole tail off the weak horse.[1]

F 2
Fig. 16: A human figure with many heads, standing on a globe.[2]

We have proved that heroism and the rewards of artists are due to Moria, and the same is true of cleverness. If by cleverness we mean knowledge, then it is obvious that only Folly can relieve the repression exerted by modesty and by fear upon the wise man. If however we mean understanding then it is certainly true that the wise man who tried to unmask the players on the stage would only cause a disturbance in this farce which we call society. What would happen for instance if any one showed that the wicked prince whom all regarded with awe as their superior was the miserable slave of his passions?

F 4 v
Fig. 17: The wicked prince, a foreigner, richly clothed in worldly apparel.

And now for something that ought perhaps to remain unsaid: even the path to wisdom can be found only with the help of Folly. The passions which according to the philosophers are part of Folly's power serve mankind as a spur to do their best. A man so wise that he understood everything would advise even the gods to destroy themselves. But the protégés of Folly cling to life even after it has left them. The old man pursues the young girl and the aged woman buys herself a young lover. Their follies make them ridiculous and hurt their reputation, but it is certainly better to give oneself up to a sweet delusion than to hang himself? These follies are human and no creature is unhappy that lives after its own nature.

G 3
Fig. 18: The eternal suitor.

G 3 v
Fig. 19: The eager old woman.

It is sophistry to believe that Mother Nature gave out just when she came to man and that he therefore has need of knowledge. The Golden Age managed very well without rhetoric and without laws too, since there was no knowledge of depravity. The only sin was to try to grow wiser than it was granted to man to be. But to-day we think more of those who are nearest the general intelligence, or rather folly of mankind. The theologian starves, the physicist freezes and the astrologer is ridiculed.[3] Only

[1] The Roman general Sertorius (circa 80 B. C.) who was able to hold out against the power of Rome in Spain for some time used this fable, according to Valerius Maximus, in order to teach his trusty Lusitanians that in dealing with the troops sent out by Rome each portion must be treated separately.

[2] The word *Minos* below the picture (Fig. 16, F 2, facsimile) refers to the commentary beside it explaining the reference to Minos and to Numa.

[3] Holbein also mocks at the scholar by showing him as an astrologer, both in the Moria, cf. N 4 v, as well as in his Dance of Death. (Cf. the illustration on page 70.)

H v
Fig. 20: The physician inspecting a basket as if he could make a diagnosis from it.

the physician is regarded with respect, and that in proportion to the audacity he displays. Pettifogging lawyers are next in rank.[1] And if the arts that are nearest to Folly are the best, then those men are the happiest who follow nature alone.

For nature is a sure guide so long as man does not leap over the boundary set for him. In the animal world the happiest creatures are those who like the bees have no schoolmaster except nature. The horse on the other hand who is nearer man comes in for his share of human troubles when it comes to races or to wars as well as on other occasions.

H 3 v
Fig. 21: The joyous simpleton.

H 4
Fig. 22: Emperor Maximilian I. and a fool who is enjoying a bite.

I
Fig. 23: A woman beckoning to a fool.

Folly calls on the immortal gods to testify that there is nobody happier among mortals than the fool, the imbecile, and the simpleton. Everybody likes fools. The greatest kings are pleased with them and many princes could not enjoy a meal without a fool present to amuse them. Another gift of fools that is not to be despised is their honesty and it is not difficult to tolerate their frankness. A fool can utter a truth in the presence of princes that might cost a wise man his life. Women too who are inclined to be joyous and tricky by nature have a special weakness for fools and often find that what began in fun turns out to be serious. The wise man on the other hand embitters the best part of his life by wakefulness, worrying, and sweating; he is a burden to his fellows; he is pale and thin and weak; he ages early and dies without having really lived.

I 3 v
Fig. 24: Hunting the stag.[2]

Men suffer from terrible madness, it is true, but in spite of croakings from the market place the lesser madness, of which all humans have a share, which is really more particularly the domain of Moria has something splendid about it. Among those especially favored are men whose passion is the chase. There are also those who burn with an insatiable desire for building and cannot cease till they have no means left with which to raise a roof over their heads. Then there are those who seek the fifth element

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[1] Myconius remarks here: "I remember hearing lawyers who in their own estimation were far from undistinguished say that no man could become a thoroughly competent lawyer who did not have a perfect command of the philosophy of the sophists in all its details. It was on the occasion when a Bachelor of Theology held a public disputation in Basle on the value of the Parva Logicalia, and the horse on which "my friend Glareanus sat" created the disturbance mentioned above. "What will the philosophers say? Anno 15.." The Parva Logicalia was a very popular text-book which Myconius also ridicules elsewhere, as More does also. (See p. 26, note 2).

[2] On the two folios I 4 and I 4 v of our facsimile following this picture we have a narrative by Myconius that is the best check for dating the drawings and is interesting enough to insert entire: "As this sketch was finished, the wickedness not to say desire to rob of some Basle ragamuffins broke out in front of my school in my absence. First they raised a foolish shout, then they beat on the door and the wooden shutters and threw stones at the house, and called my wife out with indecent language. But this was not enough to satisfy the scoundrels, they forced their way into the school and ran their swords through the (crown glass) windows. In the meantime I returned home to find my wife and my little son in tears. When they told me what had happened I gnashed my teeth with rage. Shortly after that one of them beat on the door again with all his might, and I pursued him as he ran away. But when I rushed out, three of them came at me with drawn swords, one of them struck at me and gave me a wound in my right hand. Then they stopped their laying about them and called to me from the churchyard: 'Teacher, teacher, may we not claim sanctuary here?' When I heard these words I stopped and it was only then that I noticed that my hand was bleeding, and felt that I was injured. I

with secret arts. In the case of those who gamble it is true, their passion often develops into a fearful madness.

But without any doubt those who love to hear about miracles and ghosts are especially grist for Folly's mill, for this sport not only makes the time pass quickly but also brings in revenue for the priests. Akin to these are the men who believe that the day they look at a Saint Christopher they are invulnerable against death; or that if they salute a sculptured Barbara they will return safely from battle. Among them also we include those who believe in the efficacy of indulgence,[1] of magic texts or of the miraculous verses which it is said a devil revealed to Saint Bernard. In this category of happy delusions we include the belief that every locality has its own saint and that each saint has his special duties and that votive pictures must be dedicated to them in order to induce them to exert their skill. But if an annoying wise man appeared on the scene and told them: "You will die happy if your life was good; you will be absolved of your sins if you add repentance and reformation to your offering of money; the saint will protect you if you take pattern by his conversion" – the poor sinners would be in a desperate state.

I 4 v
Fig. 25: Two dice players.

K
Fig. 26: A fool praying to a picture of St. Christopher.

K 2 v.
Fig. 27: St. Bernard and the devil.[2]

We may merely mention those who cannot be distinguished from the lowest of the low and still pride themselves on their noble birth, and those stupids who fall on their knees before this kind of creature. But why pick out individuals when at every turn one meets people made happy by conceit: The ugly man thinks himself beautiful, the beginner considers himself a Euclid, and the man with no music in his soul behaves like the donkey confronted by the harp. The prettiest sight of all is the man who boasts of the gifts of his subordinates as if he were the talented one. What need in this connection to speak of actors singers orators and poets? It is well known that the less talented a man is the more he praises himself.

K 4
Fig. 28: A young nobleman wearing a gold chain and holding a falcon on his wrist.

K 4 v
Fig. 29: A fool admiring his puppets.

Every man has his own conceit of himself every nation too, and every city. The Britons believe that beauty, music,[3] and a good table are found only in their country. The Scottish are proud of their noble birth and of their skill in dialectics. The French pride themselves on their politeness;

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ran right to the surgeon, he sewed up my wound and I went home. What happened after that I shall not record here. I know however *where* it should be recorded! In the year 1515, on Saint Thomas' day, in the twenty-seventh year of my age." – This was the twenty-ninth of December, the day sacred to Thomas à Becket, not that of the Apostle of that name (December the twenty-third), as he writes "divus Thomas" and not "Sanctus Apostolus". The text of Myconius' marginal notes is not entirely clear here in some of the details, as is also the case elsewhere. We correct the most obvious mistakes of the humanist without comment.

[1] Myconius at this point relates a very significant anecdote on the abuse of indulgences that prevailed at that time in Germany and in Switzerland.

[2] In Lister's commentary there is a story that a devil boasted to the saint that he knew seven verses of the Psalms that guaranteed Heaven to any one who recited them daily. But when Bernard threatened to read the whole Book of Psalms through every day thereafter in order not to miss those seven, the devil who did not wish to provoke any such meritorious work as that told him which they were.

[3] Probably refers to the love of music in Sir Thomas More's house. From the early days of the Middle Ages down to the 17th century England had an important part in the musical activity of the western world; indeed, in the first half of the 15th century she exercised a decided influence on Dutch and on French music.

the Parisians regard theology as their peculiar province; the Italians think that they excel in literature and in oratory and besides they consider themselves the only civilized people in the world. The Turks flatter themselves they have the best religion, the Jews are waiting for their Messiah while still holding fast to their Moses. The Spanish concede to no other people their glory in war; the Germans glory in their gigantic stature and in their knowledge of magic.[1]

L v
Fig. 30: The Turk worshipping an antique statue, and the Jew holding the tablets of the law

Very similar to conceit, which is self-flattery, is adulation or flattery of others. While there is a bad kind to be sure, Folly's kind springs from kindness of heart and innocence. Assentatio is her name and she is a sister of Philautia. She comforts the dejected she is able to lure the young into learning their lessons,[2] she cheers the aged, she enlightens princes, and accomplishes many more good deeds. It is as disinterested as one mule scratching another's back. The worst of all is not to allow yourself to be imposed on. It is easier to acquire happiness through an illusion for even the most useless occupation like learning grammar requires an effort. Illusions are cheaper too. If a man admires a wooden board all daubed up with red and yellow paints because he thinks it is a painting by Apelles or by Zeuxis he is much better off than one who buys an original work of art at a high price and has only half the pleasure in it. "I know a man by my name (More) who, as a joke, gave his young wife imitation jewels as a present." What harm did it do the girl if she carefully locked up trash instead of a valuable treasure? Her husband received credit for his generosity, he was amused at his wife's ignorance and saved his money.

L 2 v
Fig. 31: Two mules scratching each other's backs.

L 3 v
Fig. 32: Apelles at his easel painting his Venus Anadyomene.

We give Bacchus credit for drowning our sorrows but the intoxication that Folly induces lasts forever and costs nothing.

M
Fig. 33: Zeus trashing Ate.[3]

Not all the gods are generous with their gifts. Jupiter does not lend his sceptre to every man... The son of Saturn often wields the thunderbolt. Neptune drowns more travellers than he spares. The gods of the Underworld and of delusion (Ate)

[1] Myconius comments on this passage: "Erasmus only makes this remark as his friends told me because of the Abbot of Spanheim, who boasted in a letter that he had discovered such supernatural things through the study of science (per rationes naturæ) that I can hardly believe that anything so shocking was ever arrived at by any man through association with spirits (per dæmonum conjurationes) nor by means of any other kind of witchcraft whatever." The Abbot of Spanheim is John Trithemius, born in 1462, Abbot in Sponheim near Kreuznach from 1483 to 1506 and from 1506 till his death in 1516 Abbot in the Scottish monastery in Würzburg. He was regarded with enormous respect as a universal genius even by the Emperor Maximilian and other German princes; the masses considered him a magician. He accomplished cures that seemed miraculous in those days and prophesied a revolution for the year 1525 that was supposed to have been fulfilled by the Reformation and the Peasants' War. But in his later years, as we now know, he was guilty of shameless frauds in his History of the Franks and his Annals of Hirsau. His scientific studies and theories are recorded in his Nepiachus, published by Eccard, Corpus Historicum Medii Aevi T. II. No. XIII. Leipzig, 1733.

[2] Myconius: "Let those schoolmasters take note who think that raging at the boys is teaching them."

[3] According to Iliad XIX, 125 ff., Agamemnon, in his reconciliation with Achilles describes how Zeus, when he saw that Hera had outwitted him, seized Ate (delusion or mischief) "by the shining hair of her head" and cast her out of heaven down on the works of man. This drawing would also appear to be in the wrong place, as it illustrates the passage on p. 20 between Figs. 9 and 10.

I shall not name at all. "I, Folly, am the only divinity who showers gifts on all whatever their deserts."

Moria needs no sacrifices and no temples, however much hurt she is at the ingratitude of man. She is satified if they love her dearly and profess themselves her votaries by their behavior; while they dedicate superfluous candles to the Virgin without however living in accordance with her teaching.[1] The whole world is Moria's and worships her without ceasing.

M v
Fig. 34: Women lighting candles before the image of the Virgin.

PART TWO
EXAMPLES FROM LIFE AND FROM LITERATURE

In case there is any one who still doubts the foregoing, proof will now be adduced to show how much men owe to Folly and how highly they regard her, how distinguished they think her.

a) THE FOLLY OF MANKIND IN GENERAL
(*Communis vita mortalium stultitia plena*)

Our friends the common people are certainly devotees of Folly. One man is more in love with the object of his affections the less she cares for him; another marries the dowry and not the bride; one man sacrifices everything to his gluttony; another values nothing but sleep. One man is extravagant; another saves for posterity, and so it goes. And many a man goes off and makes a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to Rome, or to the tomb of Saint James at Compostella where he has no business to be, and leaves the children at home with his wife. The whole buzzing crowd resembles nothing so much as a swarm of insects whom the breath of war or a pestilence scatters by the thousand.

M 3
Fig. 35: The sleep of weariness.

M 4
Fig. 36: The pilgrim.

b) THE FOLLY OF THE LEARNED
(*Stultitia doctorum hominum*)



Among those who have a reputation for wisdom a high place is assigned to the *schoolmasters*. They are half-starved and in their shabby gowns they sit in their treadmill or rather torture chamber and grow old from their labors, deaf from the noise, and dizzy from the bad air in the stuffy school rooms, but thanks to Folly, they think themselves the leaders of the world. They delight to chastise the trembling crowd with the rod and their dearest delusion is the belief that they are truly learned. The *grammarians* are also especially favored by Folly. I know a universal genius of the

M 4 v
Fig. 37: The flogging school tyrant.

[1] Myconius says: "During my stay in Basle in the year of our Lord 1515 I heard a theologian preach who said that he considered that it would be well to require artists of some ability to produce most carefully images of the saints as if the latter had really sat for their portraits in order that the masses might be the more attracted to piety. This is really worth stressing, advice so valuable should not be scattered on the winds of heaven." The last sentence is ironical.

first order who could rule over the whole world but instead he devotes himself to establishing a few rules of grammar.

N v
Fig. 38: The poet.[1]

The *poets* owe Folly less than others do though their only purpose in life is to tickle the ears of fools with nonsense and with fables. They promise themselves and others immortality and it is a fact that Philautia (self-love) and Kolakeia (flattery) are their special companions. *The teachers of rhetoric* come next, and then the *authors* who hope to attain immortality through their books. For a small return they wear themselves out crossing out what they have written, rewriting, elaborating, and all they have to show for their labors is sore eyes poverty and the enemies they make, whereas if they would scribble down anything that came into their heads commit plagiarism and praise one another they would accomplish much more in less time.

N 3 v
Fig. 39: The lawyer, with a legal document in his hand.

N 4
Fig. 40: The bearded philosopher.

N 4 v
Fig. 41: The mathematician holding a terrestrial and a celestial globe.[3]

The *lawyers* however claim the first place among the learned. They are the people who ceaselessly roll the stone of Sisyphus, believing that whatever is laborious must be distinguished.[2] To them we may add the great talkers, the dialecticians and the sophists who dispute endlessly about nothing at all. Next come the *philosophers*, so venerable in their cloaks and their long beards. They can explain the structure of the universe as if they came to us from the council of the gods. They look down on the vulgar herd, especially when they lay squares on triangles. Some of them can even foretell future events from a study of the stars.

N 4 v
Fig. 42: A highly placed theologian in his ermine cloak meditating on the works of Duns Scotus.

O v
Fig. 43: Ares and Aphrodite surprised by Hephæstus (Vulcan).[4]

It would be better for Folly to pass by the *theologians* otherwise they will at once raise a cry of "Heresy!" though it must be agreed that these people are also beholden to Folly. To be sure they hide themselves behind so thick a hedge of definitions, conclusions, etc., and are so crafty about leaving loopholes for escape, that even the nets of Vulcan could not trap them, they could always wriggle out of them. Among others, such difficult questions as the following are worthy of a true theologian: would it be

[1] Note in the same hand as appears in Fig. 2: "This figure represents Glareanus." This statement is obviously correct though not made by Myconius. Cf. the illustration p. 25 from Heinrich Pantaleon, Prosopographia, Basle, Brylinger, 1565.

[2] Myconius here records a conversation that he had with Lister, the commentator of the Moria, on the Parva Logicalia which they both condemned. (Cf. above p. 22, note 1.) The note is dated 1515.

[3] In the text the mathematician and the astrologer are presented as a sort of subdivision of the philosophers, while in the marginal notes they are considered separately. At the universities the astronomers as well as the philosophers belonged to the faculty of Arts. Holbein's mathematician with the celestial globe is the likeness of a man who seems also to have served as model for the astronomer in the Dance of Death, possibly John Roman Wonnecker (Wonecker, Windecker) of Windecken near Hanau, who was town physician and member of the faculties of Law and Medicine in the University of Basle, also an astronomer. He died in 1524. Sebastian Münster was not yet important. Cf. the illustration p. 70.

[4] Cf. Odyssey VIII, 261 ff.: At the dance that the Phæacian youths perform for Odysseus the bard Demodokos recites the "charming tale of Aphrodite and Ares." Hephæstus, informed by Apollo that his wife has betrayed him forges invisible unbreakable chains for the culprits which he secretly fastens around and over his nuptial couch, and then pretends to depart for Lemnos in order that the guilty pair may be surprised amidst the laughter of the other gods. Ares is made to beg for his release and is freed only after Poseidon guarantees his good behavior for the future.

possible for the Lord to have been born in the form of a pumpkin? How could a pumpkin have preached, and how could the Crucifixion have been carried out? The *schoolmen* pursue their subtleties much more subtly. The Apostles behaved quite differently. They worshipped the Lord but they never received any prescription to worship as Christ an image of him if only it had two fingers upraised flowing locks a halo and three rays of light. No one would know so much as that unless he had studied the metaphysics of Aristotle and of Duns Scotus.

O 4
Fig. 44: Christ with his hand raised in blessing.

The Apostles reduced heathen and Jewish philosophers to silence but not by the arts of logic. Before a heretic entered into a contest with them he should be practised in these arts and endowed with magic virtues, and even then it would be like the progress of the web of Penelope. Instead of sending our ineffective soldiers against the Turks and the Saracens we should allow all these Scotists, Occamists and Albertists to take arms against them. However, many theologians are disgusted with these useless practises. But those who advocate their use believe that they are supporting the Church by their conclusions as Atlas, according to the poets, bears the heavens on his shoulders. The *theologians* are filled with indescribable joy when they vary the words of the Gospel as if they were playing with a lump of modeling wax.[3] They take the same pleasure in portraying life in the underworld, or else they add sphere after sphere in ascending order in the heavens till they reach the one where the blessed wander at pleasure or even play ball. Their heads are stuffed to the bursting point with nonsense such as this and their headache must be worse than Jupiter's at the birth of Minerva. One thing that makes even Folly laugh is the atrocious Latin which they believe marks them as scholars.

P
Fig. 45: Penelope at her loom.[1]

P v
Fig. 46: Atlas bearing on his shoulders the heavens with the seven spheres.[2]

P 2 v
Fig. 47: Hephæstus (Vulcan) has just split Jupiter's head open and Pallas (Minerva) emerges fully armed.[4]

Next to them in happiness are the *religious* and the *monks*, so called, though they are neither pious nor solitary since one meets them at every turn. While everybody considers it unlucky to come upon them by chance they are wonderfully pleased with themselves. Many of these monks make capital of their mendicancy and it is impossible to escape them at inns or in travelling carriages or on boats. They scrupulously observe all the regulations concerning the externals in dress and in other matters, and thus many

P 3
Fig. 48: A cowled monk with a folio.[5]

P 3 v
Fig. 49: The mendicant friar.

[1] Cf. Odyssey II, 85 and ff. where one of the suitors, Antinous, reproaches Penelope in the public assembly which was called together by Telemachus, saying that she is responsible for all the misfortune that has overtaken the house of Odysseus. For with more guile even than women usually show, she has deceived the nobles for three years, giving it out that she must not think of marrying again until she has woven a large shroud for Laertes. But she never finished her work, for every night she undid what she had accomplished by day. Now, however, that she has been caught, she will be obliged to desist, however unwillingly.

[2] Probably Myconius wrote the notes on the spheres which we see in the circles.

[3] Myconius mentions here the opinion of a man of the people on such excessive cleverness and closes with the words: "Anno 16 Basileæ."

[4] A star covers Jupiter since he also ranks as a planet. The birth of Pallas was represented on the east pediment of the Parthenon. Holbein has probably overlooked the fact that Vulcan, unlike the other inhabitants of Olympus, does not belong to the planetary deities.

[5] The book probably suggests the gabbling of verses from the Psalms without understanding them, as is mentioned on the next page.

P 4: Fig. 50: A monk with one arm around a girl but using a tool to touch the gold that lies before him.[1]

Q Fig. 51: The monk with a paunch.[2]

Q 2 Fig. 52: Aeneas and Cerberus.[4]

Q 3 v Fig. 53: Apollo and the children of Niobe. The mother is turning to stone.[5]

Q 4 v Fig. 54: The chimera, as described by Horace.[6]

R Fig. 55: An ass confronting a harpist.

R v Fig. 56: A king wearing his crown and the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

of them would no more touch money than if it were poison; though they are less careful to avoid contact with wine and with women. Most of them exert themselves to observe the ceremonies and to obey the rules made by men and never consider that Christ will require from them only obedience to his precepts and especially charity. And one will point to his paunch distended with all kinds of fish another will boast of some other good deed but Christ will reply: "I will have no dealings with such as these." These people constitute a danger too, especially the mendicants, because they know all the secrets of the confessional and do not hesitate to mention them in their sermons and they never cease bellowing till you throw them a sop to close their mouths[3]. It is amusing to see the preachers imitate the orators of old, following their rules of rhetoric whether appropriate or not. One of them even undertook to explain that the letter S in the name of Jesus proved that He would take upon Himself the *Sins* of the world. This introduction almost petrified the audience, like Niobe of old. The exordium in these orations has no connection with the argument. The main theme becomes subordinate and the most remote point is dragged in by the heels and made the principal thought and thus they produce their chimera such as Horace tried in vain to describe when he wrote *Humano capiti* etc. (With a human head, etc.)

Furthermore, the delivery of the oration is merely a senseless and barbaric compliance with ancient rules. The manner in which they follow the old formula for introducing jokes reminds one of nothing so much as the story of the ass and the harp. From all this we can see how heavy the debt of the Dominican friars is to Folly since with her help they tyrannize over the people by empty ceremonies by buffoonery and by shouting. *Kings* and *princes* on the other hand, as is seemly for the free born, openly acknowledge their adherence to Folly. For if a prince had only half an ounce of sense he would realize that his slightest mistake would have serious consequences though opportunities for mistakes were frequent,

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[1] Note, probably by Myconius: "This is a portrait of Gronovius."

[2] Myconius says: "Do you suppose that the protuberance which you see here comes from much fasting and from laboring and from serious consideration of divine matters, or was it caused by an abundance of dainty food and drink by laziness and by indifference to the divine matters already mentioned?"

[3] A note here, dated 1516, contains a criticism of a preacher to whom Myconius refers in other notes and for whom he seems to have had great contempt.

[4] This story is mentioned only in the commentary. Cf. Vergil, Æneid VI, 420,: The hero holds the golden bough in his right hand and with his left throws the soporific cake to Cerberus.

[5] Myconius says: "Drawing is incorrect."

[6] Ars Poetica, 1 ff.:

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
Iungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas,
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne,
Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?

In the commentary Lister quotes Iliad VI, 181, where Glaucus tells the story of Bellerophon who killed the "monster" chimera, but the description is quite different: the head of a lion, the tail of a dragon and in the middle the body of a goat, breathing forth fire.

and he would be able neither to sleep nor to eat. He would consider that perjury and parricide were too high a price to pay for his power. But thanks to Folly's favor they never concern themselves about such matters and think of nothing but their own pleasure and of fleecing the townsmen. If any prince of our times were to examine his way of life he would blush for shame. The *courtiers* are distinguished by their subservience to the princes; each one tries to outdo the others; they carry on like the Phæacians and like Penelope's lovers (good-for-nothings).

R 2 v
Fig. 57: A richly dressed courtier.

The customs instituted by princes are followed consistently by popes cardinals and bishops. The *bishops* entrust the care of their sheep to others, as well as the duties of their office when the very name episcopus (bishop) should serve to remind them what their function is; but they supervise only the nets in which they fish for money. The *cardinals* do no better though they are the successors of the Apostles. But if they only considered the symbolic significance of their shining vestments and that they are called upon to exhort to prevent wars to withstand wicked princes and in case of need to be willing to give up their blood as well as their goods for their Christian flock the race for the purple would soon be over. But who would be more afflicted in spirit than the *popes* if they ever pondered on their title of Holy Father? They would have no more use for money, honors, power or splendor; nor for taxes indulgences horses or mules. They would care only for prayers, fasting, preaching, and their studies, and all the attendants at the court from the registrar and secretaries down to the mule drivers money changers and procurers would starve. But now they leave their work, as a rule, to Peter and to Paul – who have plenty of time – and take the glory and the joy for their portion.

R 3
Fig. 58: A bishop in his canonicals.

R 3 v
Fig. 59: A cardinal in full canonicals, seated under a baldachin.

R 4
Fig. 60: Pope Leo X on his throne.

It would be too old fashioned to work miracles unpleasant to die and disgraceful to be crucified. Thus they fortify themselves with the fair speeches which Paul mentions and with anathemas with pictures of the torments of hell (*ultrices picturæ*) and with sentences of excommunication, but especially against those who seek to diminish the material patrimony of Peter. Only when a pope has shed streams of blood in defense of these wordly goods does he believe that he is defending the Church in the true Apostolic way. Then decrepit old men (like Julius II) appear as strong and unwearied as the young, no exertion is too great no consideration too weighty even

R 4 v
Fig. 61: A canvas showing a heretic on his funeral pyre being crowned by devils.[1]

[1] According to Lister's commentary on *ultrices picturæ* it was customary at Rome to expose to the public gaze pictures representing those who were excommunicated. The word *Fabricius* here is probably a later addition by Myconius. This may refer to the pastor of Stein on the Rhine, Erasmus Schmid, otherwise known as Fabritius. He was canon at the cathedral in Zurich at the time when Zwingli was called thither at the end of 1518. He favored the Reformation from the beginning and was effective in disseminating Luther's writings, and in 1516 he was sent back to Basle. He exchanged letters with Myconius. He had however taken part in the so-called Ittingen storm. Pastor Oechsli, a protestant, was a close associate of Schmid's in Burg near Stein. He was attacked on the night of July 18, 1524 in the Thurgau by order of the Swiss governor and was dragged to Frauenfeld as a prisoner. The populace of Stein and its neighborhood thereupon rose in revolt to liberate their beloved pastor. However, on the way to Frauenfeld the rich Carthusian monastery of Ittingen which lies on the right bank of the Thur and opposite Frauenfeld was pillaged. Since the governor had in the meantime assembled his trusty

S v Fig. 62: A priest and a soldier.

if the world goes to pieces. But there are some bishops among the Germans who are even more dauntless. They consider it almost a disgrace to die elsewhere than on the field of battle. And the rank and file of priests would think it a sin not to rival their bishop. Nobody sleeps when it is a question of harvesting profits. Everybody urges all the others to be active in the performance of religious duties.

S 2 v Fig. 63: The goddess of fortune emptying a bag of gold into a fool's lap.

S 3 Fig. 64: Erasmus, working at his desk.[1]

Folly does not however wish to criticize the good princes (of the Church) but only to point out that no mortal man can live happily unless he has been initiated into her mysteries. How could it be otherwise when even Rhamnusian Nemesis, or Fortune, goddess of retribution, is in such perfect accord with Folly that she has always hated the wise but showers gifts on fools even when they sleep? There are countless proverbs that might be cited to prove this statement, if Folly were not afraid to appear to plagiarize her devoted Erasmus (Erasmi mei commentaria).

S 3 v Fig. 65: The jewelled fop.

Thus we see that Folly favors the foolish but that Wisdom makes men timid. On every hand you may see wise men suffering from poverty hunger and failure, neglected and hated. The fools on the other hand are rolling in wealth, they are made the rulers of the commonwealth, and if they choose to associate with gilded deities (inter gemmeos deos) they will certainly have no use for wisdom. Wherever you turn, among popes and princes among high and low only money counts (omnia praesentibus nummis parantur), and since the wise man despises money they all flee him too.

c) TESTIMONY OF AUTHORS IN PRAISE OF FOLLY
(*Laus stultitiæ ex autoribus*)

S 4 Fig. 66: A toper (a fat and shining pig) and his girl.[2]

In a few words we shall now demonstrate that there is no lack of authorities who prove the validity of Folly in their books no less than in their deeds. We shall therefore adduce examples which *fundamentally prove nothing.* This adage itself is foolish. Horace is even plainer in bidding us mingle a moment of folly with our counsels when he brings in *the fat and shining pig from Epicure's herd.* And again he says: *It is delightful to be foolish*

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followers on the other bank, he was able to prevent a forced entry into the city and consequent bloodshed, but three of the ringleaders were later beheaded and pastor Schmid was obliged to flee from Stein. He was also banned from Zurich, excluded by the amnesty and not pardoned until 1528 when all of northern Switzerland, including Berne and Basle resolutely returned to the Reformation. It is quite possible that Erasmus Schmid, otherwise Fabritius, was branded in the manner described by Lister as a Roman custom. Those who were sentenced in the Ittingen trial were regarded by the Reformers as martyrs. The artist Thomas Schmid, see below, p. 38, was a relative of this Erasmus. (Cf. Jacob Wipf, Reformationsgeschichte von Schaffhausen, Zurich, 1929.)

[1] The words *Adagia Eras* and especially the scholar's name in the arch of the window can scarcely have been written by the hand of Holbein. But that Erasmus is intended here is proved by a marginal note above the sketch in the familiar handwriting of Myconius which reads as follows: "When Erasmus came to this place and saw himself represented thus, he exclaimed 'Oh, Oh, if Erasmus looked like that to-day, he would at once find himself a wife.' "

[2] This girl resembles Moria in the last sketch of the series (Fig. 82, X 4). Above this picture appears the word "Holbein" in German script, which was formerly erroneously regarded as a manuscript note by Erasmus, and later supposed to have been made by

at the proper time. And in another place he remarks: *It is better to be regarded as a fool or as uninspired than to write seriously and torture oneself with his own ineptitude*. Homer and Cicero also mention the folly of mankind, but perhaps these writers are not authoritative enough for the Christians. Let us therefore draw examples from sacred literature. Anyway, the Muses have been called upon sufficiently, and so Moria will summon the thorny soul of Duns Scotus to occupy her tenement for a short period during this difficult undertaking. Solomon writes: *The number of fools is without end*. This probably means all of mankind, but Jeremiah is even franker in his confession *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*. And a little above he warns us *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom*. There are examples in the Preacher, Solomon, in Cicero, in Ecclesiastes, and finally in the proverbs of Solomon. Again, *Folly is a joy to him that is destitute of wisdom*, that is without folly there is no joy in life. Even more pertinently: *He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow*, and once more, in Ecclesiastes: *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth*. Then follow quotations from Ecclesiastes and from the Preacher which are expounded in a wrong sense in imitation of the method of the theologians. Indeed one great theolog explained Paul in II Corinthians 11, 23 ff. in such a way that we are again reminded of the ass with the lyre. A theologian can hardly fail of success now that this great man (another jibe at Nicolas de Lyra) has expounded the words of Christ in Luke XXII, 36: *And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one* as if He meant a real weapon and not the sword of the spirit.[2] This interpreter of the Divine Mind sends the Apostles out to preach Him who was crucified with lances and crossbows and slings and blunderbusses.

S 4 v
Fig. 67: A little child with a tonsure struggling at Folly's open mouth.[1]

T
Fig. 68: Jeremiah.

T v
Fig. 69: Solomon in his royal robes.

T 2 v
Fig. 70: A fool, persuading Nicolas de Lyra.

T 3 v
Fig. 71: A theolog, playing a hand organ (Lyra).

V
Fig. 72: One of the Apostles, with the instruments of war mentioned in the text. A caricature of Julius II.

V v
Fig. 73: The judges in a trial for heresy.

At a recent disputation the question was asked what passage of Holy Writ demands that heretics be converted by burning rather than by argument. A stern old man replied that it was spoken by Paul in the Epistle to Titus, III, 10: *Hæreticum hominem post unam et alteram correptionem devita* (*A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid*). For he read the word *devita* (avoid) as *de vita* (deprive of his life). Some of his hearers laughed. But one of them came to his assistance with a passage from Deuteronomy, XIII, 5, which refers only to prophets and dreamers of dreams and the like. It is quite intelligible that the Lord has a kindly feeling for fools, even the highest princes are suspicious of those who are too clever. Just as Julius Caesar distrusted Brutus and Cassius, but had no fear of Antony so Christ disliked men who boasted of their wisdom.

V 2 v
Fig. 74: Julius Cæsar using a friendly gesture toward Antony who wears the fool's cap. Brutus stands at the left.

Myconius. Now the latter always used Latin script, even when he wrote in German (cf. S 2 v below) and besides his handwriting is quite different. The word was probably written by a later owner of the book.

[1] A note, above, reads: "The soul of Scotus." At the right side of the sketch: "It is casting out foolish arguments." Apparently both these notations are by Myconius.

[2] Erasmus' point of view probably corresponds with the idea expressed in the Gospel according to St. Luke; but his explanation is forced and the passage is still disputed. In verse 38 we find another passage not easy to explain satisfactorily: *And they* (the Apostles) *said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.* This passage was interpreted by the Mediæval Church as establishing punishments by blood. Nicolas de Lyra drew the wrath of Erasmus on himself by his commentary on the Bible.

(From now on Moria entirely abandons her malice her playful sophistries and her sprightly tone and we perceive that the editor of the Bible and of St. Jerome is voicing his own convictions. We may indicate this change by quoting a few sentences.)

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, is nothing more than *Woe unto you wise men!* And even among the animals Christ does not prefer the cleverest. The Holy Ghost descended like a simple dove and not like an eagle. Christ calls His people His sheep. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus saying *Behold the Lamb of God.* These passages from the Bible proclaim that all men, even the pious, are fools, Christ made himself of no reputation when he assumed the likeness of men. Jehovah forbade man to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil under threat of heavy punishment. Saint Bernard interprets the mountain in which Lucifer had his habitation as the mountain of knowledge. A proof that Folly is in favor with the celestial beings is that if fools make a mistake they may be forgiven, but the wise not. Thus Saul speaks to David *Behold, I have played the fool.* Again David tries to mollify the Lord by saying: *I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly.* A more earnest plea is Christ's on the Cross: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

V 3 v
Fig. 75: John the Baptist: Behold the Lamb of God.

V 4
Fig. 76: Jehovah with Adam pointing out the tree of knowledge to Adam in Paradise.

V 4 v
Fig. 77: David praying.

But the most important thing is that the Christian religion itself has some connection with a certain kind of folly. The undeveloped enjoy nothing so much as sacred and religious matters. The founders of the religion delighted in simplicity and indeed any man who is thoroughly imbued with the love of Christ behaves in a far crazier way than any fool could. He gives away all his possessions and seems to be blind to the usual rules of conduct that appear self-evident to ordinary men. Even blessedness is a sort of insanity and folly. The true Christian, like the Platonist, believes that the soul is ensnared by the bonds of the body. But if the soul meditates flight the man is regarded as ill; if it achieves its liberty he is called insane; but since the spirit is then removed from the influence of the body and is therefore able to foretell the future, he is regarded as possessing a divine quality. It often happens that when death approaches a man utters supernatural things.

X
Fig. 78: The true Christian giving away his wealth.

The masses regard the concrete as the only reality. The pious, on the other hand, whose highest goal is Christ, neglect the care of their body. Money they regard as rubbish; they reject it or flee from it. Or, if they are forced to handle anything so base, they do so most unwillingly. Since the pious strive toward the heights where the senses are not touched by trivial matters they soon degenerate. Thus it came about, so we are told, that some holy men drank oil instead of wine without becoming aware of what they had done.[1] The highest reward of piety is nothing more than a sort of insanity. For when the soul is so absorbed in the Infinite that the body refuses to perform its functions we must regard it as simple madness. The life of the pious here below is a foreshadowing of that other life, and on rare occasions it is actually permitted to them to taste the joys of the heav-

X 2
Fig. 79: A pious pauper fleeing from an offering of money.

X 2 v
Fig. 80: St. Bernard holding the ewer of oil in his hand.

[1] According to Lister's commentary, this is what happened to St. Bernard when he was absorbed in his study of the Scriptures.

enly reward, and that delight far surpasses all the pleasures of the body combined. A man who has ever had this experience remembers only that he was supremely happy while he was out of his senses and desires only to live forever in this state of madness.

X 3 v
Fig. 81: St. Jerome in ecstacy.

However – Folly interrupts her discourse – this is hunting outside of bounds. If she seems to have been too loquacious her audience may remember that it was a woman speaking. But let them recall the Greek proverb which Aulus Gellius quotes: *Often a foolish man spoke a word at the right time.*

"And now fare ye well, applaud, live, and drink, ye votaries of Folly."

X 4
Fig. 82: Folly takes leave of her audience and descends from the rostrum.



Ambrose Holbein. God the Father, from the painting, in Basle, Christ as Mediator



Hans Holbein the Younger — Lower part of one face of the sign of the school

IV. THE AUTHORS OF THE DRAWINGS

1. THE THREE DISTINCT GROUPS OF MARGINAL DRAWINGS AND THEIR RELATION TO THE NOTES

The drawings begin with Moria's oration, that is, after the dedication to Thomas More. About two-thirds (Figs. 1–55)[1] of those in the earlier part of the satire, with the exception of six in black which we can identify as later additions, are sketched with the same brown ink used for the manuscript notes in the margins by Myconius, the owner of the book. It is very evident that these notes were made later than the brown drawings, as we can distinctly see in several places: Figs. 1, 2 and 9, that is, Moria's opening words, the philosopher among the thorns and Bacchus; also at the narrative of the attack on the schoolmaster's house beside the picture of the hunt (Fig. 24, I 3 v); again, the lawyer (Fig. 39), the philosopher (Fig. 40), the mathematician (astrologer) (Fig. 41), Atlas (Fig. 46), the monks (Figs. 48, 49, 50, 51) (Folios N–Q). In many other cases this is probably also true. Later marginal notes are likewise to be found, some in various inks, as may be recognized in our reproduction, occasionally even some by another hand. Most of Myconius' notes as we shall see later were inserted among Holbein's drawings and contemporaneously with them.

But the drawings that were executed in black and not with Myconius' ink are later additions. This can be seen very clearly in the case of the charming picture showing women lighting candles before the Madonna (Fig. 34, M v). Here the artist drew a line around the word *Mola* to separate it from the drawing.

Again, one series of the brown drawings is distinguished from the later ones

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[1] The numbers of the pictures and of the folios refer to the facsimile; the page numbers refer to the text and its illustrations.

by greater firmness of line and more hasty execution. It would also appear that a somewhat broader pen had been used in drawing them. These are the earlier pictures, Figs. 1–39 with the exception of Fig. 27, St. Bernard and the devil (K 2 v) and if we also except the six black sketches in this part of the collection we have thirty-two in this set. This *first series* of drawings illustrates the introduction and particularly the first or general part of the oration; in which the dignity and the power of the goddess Folly are treated as well as her benefactions. It also extends into the second part, where the adherents of Moria are enumerated and described.

Beginning with Fig. 40, the philosopher (N 4) however, the *second series*, the lines suddenly grow finer, the execution more careful and often really graceful. The difference between the lawyer (Fig. 39, N 3 v) and the philosopher (Fig. 40, N 4) is unmistakable. There are sixteen brown drawings or seventeen if we add Fig. 27, K 2 v, St. Bernard and the devil, that are executed in this more delicate style. Judging by the majority of them it has been assumed that they are the work of Ambrose Holbein.

The last twenty-seven sketches, the *third series*, beginning with Fig. 56, the king (R v), as well as Figs. 3, 5, 6, 10, 17, and 34 in the first set, are done in black India ink. The drawing like that in the second part (Figs. 40–55) is almost always finer than in the first series, and is also always or almost always executed with a more pointed pen. There are hardly any of Myconius' notes in this last set.

The authorship of Hans Holbein in this last set of twenty-seven drawings has not thus far been contested, and of the supplementary drawings in the earlier part, which are in India ink, none has as yet been challenged, although doubt might well have been cast on them.

The thirty-three drawings of the first set, done in *brown*, are those which were attributed to two unknown Swiss artists, with the exception of Figs. 27, 32 and 33 (St. Bernard and the devil, Apelles, Zeus with Ate). It is then generally conceded that Holbein executed marginal drawings in this volume in both brown and black. However, the majority of the hasty sketches and the more spirited ones in the first series have been judged not to be Holbein's. Among them are some of the drollest and most distinguished, such as the very beginning of Folly's discourse, the fool admiring himself in the mirror (Fig. 13, E 2 v), the fool admiring his puppets (Fig. 29, K 4 v), the sleeper (Fig. 35, M 3), the schoolmaster (Fig. 37, M 4 v), the poet (Fig. 38, N v) and the lawyer (Fig. 39, N 3 v).

But if we compare the first drawing, where Moria is shown at the beginning of her oration with the last where she leaves the rostrum we shall see the chief argument against this theory; for the first sketch, especially Moria herself, is much cleverer than the last. The artist worked more industriously at the latter, but the former has the advantage of being wittier.

Now in the admiration expressed for these drawings during the four hundred years that have elapsed since Holbein drew them we are especially aware of the note of pleasure evoked by the amusing presentations, among which are Folly preaching and similar pictures in the first set. This quality attracted more attention than the astonishing technical perfection of a few of the later drawings.

It is furthermore a somewhat delicate matter in the case of a series of drawings such as these to declare that those hastily done and perhaps somewhat clumsy in exe-

cution are not the work of the great artist and to credit him only with those that are neatly executed. For hasty work does not of itself constitute a proof for or against authenticity any more than the use of a different kind of ink would. Indeed in the inquiry into the art of Raffael it was concluded that the neat drawings in the Venetian sketch book were far inferior to his hasty and careless sketches and not at all significant in the development of his originality.

In the picture showing St. Bernard and the devil (Fig. 27, K 2 v) which belongs to the undisputed works of Hans Holbein the saint is unmistakably in the finer style of the middle series, while the devil is drawn rather in the manner of the disputed first set. But the final consideration is really that analogies can be proved to exist in great numbers between the more carelessly drawn sketches and those that are more finely executed on the one hand as well as with Holbein's other work of his early years, and also — a point not to be overlooked — that the very conspicuous differences among the drawings can be much more simply explained in a different way. To prove this point it will be necessary to examine the work of the two younger Holbeins.

The drawings are almost all well preserved. Serious interference by another hand is visible in Fig. 18, G 3, the eternal suitor, similarly but less disturbing also in Figs. 32, L 3 v, Apelles; 63, S 2 v, the goddess of fortune; in Fig. 67, S 4 v, Moria trying to absorb the soul of Duns Scotus, the thorns on the child's body; in Fig. 80, X 2 v, St. Bernard, the halo. In Fig. 48, P 3, the monk with a folio, it was perhaps Holbein himself who went over part of the brown picture with India ink. There are rough additions in red ink in Fig. 12, E 2, the deceived husband; and in both red and brown ink in Fig. 14, E 4 v, Marcus Aurelius with a child.



Hans Holbein the Younger — Christ carrying the Cross. Karlsruhe



Hans Holbein the Younger — From the earliest title page with border: lower edge of border

2. THE EXTANT WORKS OF THE BROTHERS AMBROSIUS AND HANS HOLBEIN FROM 1514 TO 1518

Ambrosius and Hans Holbein the Younger were, as we now know, the sons of the painter Hans Holbein the Elder, whose forebears according to a family tradition originated in the Canton Uri, but whose family can be traced in Augsburg for many generations. The father was (circa 1500) one of the most distinguished artists in all of southern Germany though according to his style he belongs to the generation that preceded Dürer and Grünewald.

He must have been actively painting in Augsburg after 1490, and was engaged until 1504 on large altars for Augsburg but also for monasteries in Weingarten, in Kaisheim and even in Frankfort-on-the-Main. Later the larger commissions fell to the share of a younger generation of painters, Holbein's income fell off and about 1515 he was in debt. He then moved to Alsace and thereafter worked in the monastery at Isenheim and its neighborhood. Occasionally he must have assisted his greater son in Basle when the latter was overburdened with work. Among others the portraits of the founders on the two well-known altar screens with the Adoration of the kings and the shepherds, and on the tablets which have been in the cathedral at Freiburg since the Reformation exhibit the characteristics of the father's style and not those of the son. The elder Holbein died in Isenheim in 1524. Of the two sons Ambrose must have died before his father, and Hans alone survived him.

In 1515 the two brothers were still of the age of travelling journeymen and did not as yet possess their own workshop although they were executing small commissions independently. Ambrose was probably born in 1494, his brother Hans in the winter of 1497–98.

There are traces of the older brother after the year 1514 in the neighborhood

Lucretia. Wall painting in Stein on the Rhine 1516





Fortitudo. From a signed woodcut by Ambrose Holbein 1517 (W., A. H. 7)

of Constance. The gallery at Basle possesses a Madonna dated in this year that bears the coat of arms of the father and the mother of the well-known Canon Johann von Botzheim of Constance which was discovered in the 19th century in the neighborhood of Constance in the village of Rickenbach. This is a constrained youthful work and presents very strong leanings toward one of his father's compositions on St. Sebastian's altar, now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, which was at that time being painted or perhaps even finished. The Madonna more probably originated with Ambrose than with Hans, as was formerly assumed to be the case. Another early example is a small painting in the Basle collection certified in the inventory of the Amerbach Collection of 1586 as being the work of Ambrose. *Christ as Mediator* shows the Savior enthroned on clouds surrounded by angels with the implements of the Passion; above, left, God the Father, cf. the illustration on p. 33. The principal figure is after the title page of Dürer's great woodcut of the Large Passion. In view of the small size of this picture it is possible that the painting was carried to Basle as a completed work. It need not have been executed in Basle.

After 1514 Ambrose seems to have worked as apprentice to the Schaffhausen painter Thomas Schmid on the paintings for the great hall of the monastery of Stein on the Rhine which were made in 1515 and 1516.[1] The participation of

[1] The group of buildings of the monastery is most picturesquely situated at the effluence of the Rhine from the Untersee (Lake Constance), and the principal rooms look out on the river. The last abbot, David von Winkelsheim, in the decade preceding the Reformation, developed the monastery into one of the most charming late Gothic monuments of northern Switzerland. In



Hans Holbein the Younger. One corner of the so-called Zurich Table, from an engraving. Above, at the left, Nobody; below, the stag hunt; at the right, girl catching. Cf. the illustrations in the text p. 60 and the Facsimile I 3 v.

Ambrose is indicated by a monogram consisting of the letters A and H and a smaller M on the hour-glass which Death holds in his hand. Again, the necklace of the so-called Artemisia is made up of large letters strung together spelling NAMBRO which we can without undue violence take as representing AMBROSIUS HOLBEIN. There is similarly an early work of Raffael in the Barberini gallery which represents the beloved of the great Master, where the name of Raffael Sanzio is spelled out on her bracelet. Probably the model or the beloved of an artist is represented in this picture in Stein. We may certainly regard as Ambrose's signature the monogram AHM which is to be seen in a dark corner close beside a window, while the Master Thomas Schmid who had received the commission for this work, as is well established, put his monogram in an obvious place over a door on a tablet supported by putti, just as he placed the coat of arms of the nobleman who had given the order for the picture. It

the great hall he had a series of pictures painted containing many figures. They were in gray on a gray background, above a painted base. The pictures showed the following scenes: A mass and a peasant festival in Zurzach on the Rhine, the founding of Carthage and of Rome, the oath of Hannibal and of Scipio, the taking of Saguntum by the Carthaginians and of Carthage by the Romans; also on the wall by the windows and on the soffits of the windows we have the maiden and the fool, the maiden and death as well as separate characters from antiquity, and finally, in the bay window opposite the Rhine, Christian saints and the founders of the monastery.

appears from the records that Thomas Schmid was assisted by a foreign painter whose name has not yet been discovered.[1]

It is especially remarkable that the pictures with the letters which designate Ambrose are among the most mature and according to the date (1516) on the wall by the window also the latest. It is true that the apprentice seems to have assisted with the earlier work also. There is much in favor of the theory that an artist from Augsburg cooperated on the series of pictures. But the pronounced character of these paintings is totally unlike Ambrose's other works. We can conceive of a collaboration of this same artist, whose numerous authentic woodcuts appeared in publications in Basle during the years from 1517 to 1519, but only if in this piece of work he carried out the designs of another. There are however many arguments in favor of Ambrose's having worked as an apprentice in Stein. Among them we may mention the drapery of the thin garments as they so often appear in Ambrose's woodcuts of angels very similar to the St. Michael in the bay window of the great hall at Stein. Almost more striking is the similarity between the so-called Lucretia in Stein and Fortitude in the border for a title with the victory of Arminius over the Roman legions. Cf. the illustrations, p. 38. These are however only isolated cases. Artistically the more mature work at Stein is on a level with the more mature work of Ambrose in Basle. Thomas Schmid was in his prime also an excellent artist.

In 1515 the younger brother Hans had already executed an important piece of work in Basle, the so-called Zurich table, which is undoubtedly his. It is still preserved in the Swiss Landesmuseum at Zurich. It consists of a table top covered with many genre paintings. Around the edge is a continuous set of pictures: On one long side we have a tournament; on the short side to the right, fishing; on the second long side, hunting; on the other side, bird catching and girl catching. In the center of the table was the coat of arms of the knight banneret of Basle, Hans Ber, and all around the coat of arms, still in the central field, various representations, such as that of the tradesman and the monkeys; of "Nobody", who is always to blame for everything; also a children's tournament and several trick pictures showing things in their natural size which, when the painting was still fresh, appeared to be real objects lying upon the painted table. Among them was a playing card in the style of the 15th century, torn in half, also a letter addressed to Hans Holbein. All the painting, including the pictures in the border was executed on a black background, not a light background, as our illustration on page 39 might seem to indicate. But the painting is badly rubbed, and many spots and lines of the white priming have come through, making it very difficult to obtain a photographic reproduction. In this table we thus possess an authentic early work which is to be dated before September 1515, we may indeed assume that it was produced before the middle of this year, though not much earlier. It presents striking correspondences with the somewhat more mature school sign which is dated 1516. Now Hans Ber fell in the battle of Marignano, which lasted two days, the thirteenth and fourteenth of September 1515. It is of course hardly possible, as

[1] This information we owe principally to the efforts of the director Hans Rott of Karlsruhe (cf. Oberrheinische Kunst Vol. I, 1925/26, p. 206 ff.) and of the former keeper of the monastery, Heinrich Waldvogel, who is preparing a study of the abbot David von Winkelsheim. The signature A H M was discovered by the restorer, E. Morf.



Hans Holbein the Younger — Ecce Homo, after Lucas van Leyden, from a copy in Basle

Salomon Vögelin who discovered the table likewise assumed, that the table was ordered and executed after this fatality. For it is not likely that the widow would have ordered the table with these amusing pictures immediately after the tragic death of her husband. It is furthermore doubtful if it was a custom of those days for a woman to have a piece of furniture like this made after the death of her husband and decorated with his coat of arms, as this table is. The style would date it as finished before the sign of the school.

There is still another work in the gallery at Karlsruhe which dates from this earliest period and must be mentioned here though the evidence for its being by Hans Holbein is less clear than in the case of the Zurich table. This is a portion of an altar screen, painted on both sides. The painting on the front represents *Christ carrying the Cross*, with the initials H H and a date which has hitherto always been read as 1515. Upon investigation, however, it appears that these figures might just as well be 1513. On the back is a *Crowning with Thorns* in very bad condition which is to all appearances by another hand. This tablet was therefore a part of a larger altar screen on which the painting was executed by various helpers. Though it was formerly assumed that the picture was painted by the elder Holbein, it is now known that it was the work of an artist belonging to the younger generation. There are many characteristics of the father to be observed; also of both of the sons. It cannot be denied that it originated in the Holbein circle



Hans Holbein the Younger — Frieze of children. From a sketch for the Hertenstein house, Basle

and futhermore this somewhat unserviceable composition corresponds with the little historical subjects in the woodcuts in the title pages executed by the younger Holbein between 1516 and 1517, as well as with the drawings in the Moria that are composed of several figures. But this Carrying the Cross cannot of course be compared with his more mature work.

Of course this painting was intended for a greater effect than any other of the early works of 1515 and 1516. But the composition served quite different purposes, much loftier than those of the others. It might easily be the earliest preserved work of the young Holbein, for it presents much more of his father's style than do all the paintings and drawings of his with which we are acquainted.

The initials would also be suitable for the painter Hans Herbster (or Herbst). He was a contemporary of Dürer and had settled permanently in Basle in 1492, just when Dürer had reached that city in his wanderings. Herbster had attained a position of distinction in Basle, and at the time when the Holbeins appeared on the scene he was the first painter in the city. However, the authentic works of this obviously distinguished man have completely disappeared. Anything that may be ascribed to him argues against his authorship of the Karlsruhe altar screen rather than for it. Besides, the screen seems rather a constrained early work and not the creation of a mature man of the older generation. It is of course possible that the work had its origin in Herbster's studio. (Cf. the illustration on p. 36.)

The drawings for the Moria were produced about the last day of 1515 and the beginning of 1516, according to the evidence of Myconius, and the sign of the school dated 1516 probably in the weeks immediately following. In the summer of the same year Holbein executed the group portrait of the Burgomaster Meyer and his wife and of course the silver-point drawings of them. (Paintings and studies in the Basle Collection.)

The sign of the school was a wooden board, originally painted on both sides, which seems to have hung at the entrance to the schoolhouse, fastened to the wall like the sign of an inn. The board has been sawed in two and each face is framed separately. The announcement, which appears on both sides, declares, in Gothic letters, that adults and children may be taught reading and writing. Below the text are two small strips of wood on which we find paintings by Holbein. On one side we see a schoolroom in which adults are receiving instruction, and on



Ambrose Holbein — Frieze of children. Pen-and-ink drawing, Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin

the other, children being taught by the schoolmaster and by his wife. The sign is dated 1516 and is attested as the work of Hans Holbein, since it is a part of the Amerbach bequest.

The portrait of the burgomaster is dated 1516. He was elected to his high office on the twenty-fourth of June of this year, and the new honor was evidently the occasion for the painting. Holbein's success was followed by other commissions from the same patron, such as the decoration of the town hall and the Madonna at Darmstadt.

In the fall of 1516, possibly earlier, Hans Holbein received commissions from Froben's printing establishment. During the period from October 1516 to April 1517 there appeared from time to time six new woodcuts, borders for quarto title pages, very badly executed but in spite of that superior in the fineness of their decorative effect to anything that had hitherto been printed in Basle.

And finally, there is still another large drawing by Holbein which is especially valuable in judging the marginal drawings. It is preserved in the Basle Collection. It is a copy of the well-known engraving *Christ before the people* (Ecce homo) by Lucas van Leyden which had come out of the studio of the Dutch artist in 1510. Curiously enough this copy which measures 30 by 50 cm. is somewhat larger than the orginal which is 28 by 45 cm. The copy is executed with pen and ink and with the brush, largely in India ink, especially the more important parts which are more heavily drawn and are certainly the older part of the picture. A few figures are drawn in black but finished in brown, and a few are hastily sketched in brown. These faint figures may be restorations of a later day. Perhaps the work was left unfinished.

The arrangement of the picture is exactly carried over from the engraving. But the Renaissance ornaments so characteristic of Lucas van Leyden are replaced by other ornaments, characteristic of the style of the younger Holbein. One of



Hans Holbein the Younger. Frieze of children. From the portrait of the burgomaster, Basle

these decorations is the daintiest of all that appears in his early work. In architectural decoration he uses the round arch instead of the elliptical arch. The types of men and their costumes are those of southern Germany, and at the right side of the composition whole groups have been redrawn, but only such as were subordinate. In view of the importance of this drawing we here reproduce several portions of it. Cf. the illustrations, pp. 41, 55 and 62.

In the spring of 1517 Hans withdrew to Lucerne and left the field to his older brother. The most important commission that awaited him here was to paint the inner rooms of the Hertenstein house and to decorate the façade of it. This house was demolished in 1825 in spite of the fact that the paintings were still for the most part in a good state of preservation. Of the three sketches that are still in existence – one for an inner room, in a sketch book belonging to the elder Holbein, and two for the façade – one is of especial importance in our studies, namely the picture showing Leaina the beloved of Harmodios and Aristogeiton the tyrannicides appearing before the judges. There is also a sketch for a glass-painting made for the Fleckenstein family of Lucerne, now in the museum in Brunswick, wich dates from the early part of Holbein's sojourn in Lucerne and exhibits clearly a resemblance to the first Basle style of Holbein, so called, as we know it from the drawings in the Moria. Cf. pp. 55 and 61.

After 1518 Holbein took a new departure and his later drawings are of no importance in the question of establishing the authenticity of the marginal drawings.

The discovery of the initials of Ambrose, A Hm, in Stein makes it appear very doubtful that he could have been in Basle as early as the beginning of 1516. It is however possible to prove that he was in that city at the time when his younger brother Hans was painting the burgomaster of Basle and thus establishing a reputation there for ever. We learn from a report of a trial in September at which Ambrose was obliged to appear as a witness that he was present at a social event on July 25th at the studio of the painter Hans Herbster. There is also a painting by Ambrose which a later inscription designates as a portrait of Herbster. It would appear that Ambrose's signature was in the upper right-hand corner on a small shield, corresponding to the date, 1516 on the left side. At some time the name of his more famous brother was substituted in order to prove that it was the work of his hand. This painting is however quite different from the



Ambrose Holbein — Frieze of children. From one of the portraits of a blond boy, Basle

work of Hans, and ranks with the work of Ambrose of the subsequent period. It may therefore be regarded as belonging to his authentic works, especially in the treatment of the putti in the border and in the arrangement of the pictorial elements. Probably Ambrose worked as an apprentice in the studio of the Master whom he painted.

After 1517 we meet Ambrose as a more mature artist. It is quite likely that he spent the winter of 1516 to 1517 in Italy, as Hans did two years later, for after that period he introduces architectural fragments from Italy, whether appropriate or not, that are reminiscent of a traveller's notes. On the twenty-fourth of February he was admitted to the guild of the painters of Basle, in March his first authentic woodcut appeared in a book printed in Basle and then followed an uninterrupted series of similar compositions in Basle for Froben and for other publishers until 1519. A decorative alphabet deserves special mention, in the background of which he adapted the impressions of his travels (see p. 46). This alphabet was completed during the first few months after he began his residence in Basle, and can be established as existing in August 1517. Beside the letters or intermingled with them we may see now an Alpine landscape, now strongholds and Swiss cities, again architectural notes or Italian piazze and buildings. There are two circular pen-and-ink drawings preserved in Karlsruhe, dated 1518 and marked A H, one with a scene from the story of Pyramus and Thisbe and the other showing the struggle of Hercules with Antæus (see the illustrations pp. 48 and 49). These two pictures are about the same size as the marginal drawings of the Moria (diameter 6,5 cm. with the border), and therefore of great value to us as a basis for comparison. There are two[1] other pen-and-ink drawings among the authentic works that are particularly valuable for us, a transverse panelling with Renaissance festoons and with boys fighting which was lately discovered in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin by H. Kœgler (cf. the illustration, p. 43), and a hasty pen-and-ink sketch for the sheath of a dagger with putti, garlands, and Renaissance ornaments, now in the Basle Collection. This drawing corresponds so strikingly with the borders in a woodcut of 1517 that it may be regarded as evidence of the method used by the artist at this time. (Cf. the illustrations on pp. 52 and 53).

[1] A painting in Leningrad, also dated 1518, bears a monogram composed of the letters A H B though otherwise it corresponds to the other works of Ambrose in many respects.

Among the most mature works of Ambrose we may mention the two charming portraits of boys in the Basle gallery, which though not dated must belong to 1518, as in 1519 the artist disappears from view and probably died. The last woodcuts that we may assign to him are of very little value.

Late in the summer of 1519 the younger brother returned to Basle. It would seem that he took over Ambrose's studio together with an apprentice and a commission undertaken by his older brother but not finished. Be that as it may, it is clear that the two brothers avoided each other. Hans had made a position for himself at Lucerne and had commissions of the most diverse kind, but when his brother's disappearance opened the way for him Hans returned to this more fertile field.

The two brothers entered upon a new course in Basle together and were therefore dependent upon the same patrons. When they arrived in Switzerland they found a group of painters who expressed in their art the warlike spirit of the Confederacy so that pictures of military life engaged their best efforts. The greatest though by no means the only representatives of this school were the gifted and spirited Urs Graf of Solothurn, who was at that time principally active in Basle, and Niclaus Manuel, more brilliant and more elegant, who worked in Berne. The Amerbach family had so great an appreciation of this art that a thorough study of that generation of artists is possible to-day only in the Basle Collection. The humanists however preferred the more elegant art of the sons of Holbein as is natural since they alone expressed everything that the humanists valued in literature.

Although the work of the two brothers was so similar, a closer study reveals so characteristic an adjustment on principle to the graphic arts that it is hardly now possible in many cases to confuse their work. Such confusion as existed was possible because the brothers learned from each other and probably were mutually helpful, and restorers and woodcutters did much to obliterate the characteristics of the work of each, so that confusion did exist from time to time.

Ambrose Holbein
Recollections of Italy



From an ornamental alphabet
1517

3. THE STYLE OF THE TWO BROTHERS

The older brother was apparently more amiable and more attractive, of a poetic temperament, moved by the picturesque and responsive toward landscape. His love of landscapes is shown in the backgrounds of his woodcuts, distorted as they often are in the course of reproduction. We also have some unusual portraits by him: there are not many of the studies left by Hans Holbein even from his mature years that are so delicate and graceful in expression as is the silver-point drawing of the brown-haired boy lately acquired by the Basle Collection. Ambrose was without doubt one of the most distinguished artists at the beginning of the 16th century of those whose accomplishment has come to our knowledge. His gifts did not equal those of his brother, however, and it is not only because Hans had a longer life that the younger brother made the name of the gifted Holbein family famous throughout the western world. Immediately after his return from Italy we may observe the rapid rise of his talent, the real flowering of Ambrose's art, though the last woodcuts credited to him which he executed about the end of 1518 or in 1519 are decidedly inferior, but whether he was already in the grip of a fatal disease, or else had deteriorated into a mere manual laborer we do not know. Even the two drawings in Karlsruhe, dated 1518, give evidence of a very characteristic practise. He seems to have used a formula for everything and shows a preference for the very wavy lines used by many of his contemporaries among the Swiss down to the school of Altdorfer. We miss the clear objectivity which early distinguished the work of Hans.

The really extraordinary cleverness of the younger brother was probably recognized at an early date in his own family.

Not only was Hans more gifted than his brother; his talents developed in a different direction. He was also much more intellectual than Ambrose and was therefore destined to be rather a dramatist than a lyric poet, as we may perhaps designate Ambrose. This difference was later brought out very distinctly in the Dance of Death.

But even in these early years the work of Hans shows more deliberation and his development presents a much more consistent effort toward perfection.

It is well known that Hans Holbein was a great historical painter although all his bulkier histories have been destroyed; and that he was one of the greatest portrait painters of all time is attested by numerous works still extant. Both of these talents presuppose not only great psychological acuteness but also special ability to present a lifelike and lively picture of his subject with the individuality of each human being differently expressed. Holbein is distinguished among many of the greatest artists like Dürer and Rubens by his *ability to express characteristics without exaggerating*. His reproduction is so true to nature as to appear almost photographic and yet his own reaction toward what he sees is expressed with disconcerting clearness. Judging from the cartoon for the wall painting in Whitehall, now destroyed, we can easily believe that whoever looked at the finished painting was seized with fright, and that this effect was created not by overemphasis but by an objective representation of the powerful despot, though with artistic consideration. Similar performance could not have been looked for in Ambrose, who exhibited a leaning toward the mannerisms of his day when he was only twenty-five years old.



Ambrose Holbein. Pyramus and Thisbe. Pen-and-ink drawing, Karlsruhe

Hans Holbein does not delineate his subjects in the manner of many great portrait painters, by snatching at an expression that reveals the character of the individual, but he faithfully reproduces the underlying person in repose. Another difference between Hans and his brother is the very strong feeling for plastic form that the younger had inherited. In this way his talent met the trend of the times which was directed toward everything Italian. This native aptitude did not however express itself in an exaggeration of the muscular system and especially of the modelling as was so general in the Mannerists of his time and the following decades and also in the Classicists of later centuries. He reproduced surfaces with great *delicacy of feeling*, especially of the human face; and he had an extraordinary way of emphasizing the essentials of the natural form – in portraits, of the man himself – without using any harsh accentuation or exaggeration. His very way of laying on the colors at once reveals the main lines of the delineation; the set of a head can be seen at a glance, and so on.

This skill in sketching his pictures allowed him to be clear without overemphasis. The characteristics of Holbein's art are thus *moderation* in characterization, *objectivity* and finally *lucidity* in the whole composition. The trend of his genius early showed itself, especially in trifles though the full development was a lengthy process.

The difference in the artistic direction of the two brothers may well be noted in the two portraits of 1516 which are so similar in externals that they have sometimes both been ascribed to Hans. In the portrait of the painter Hans Herbster the characteristic lines of the face are merely sketched in. The painting of the burgomaster, on the contrary, presents a marked contrast to it in the detailed modelling that carefully records every form, every rise and fall of the surfaces exactly as they appeared to the beholder, so that the face of the painter, who was twenty years older than the burgomaster, appears almost empty. Similarly the composition and the execution of the two boys in Basle are differentiated from



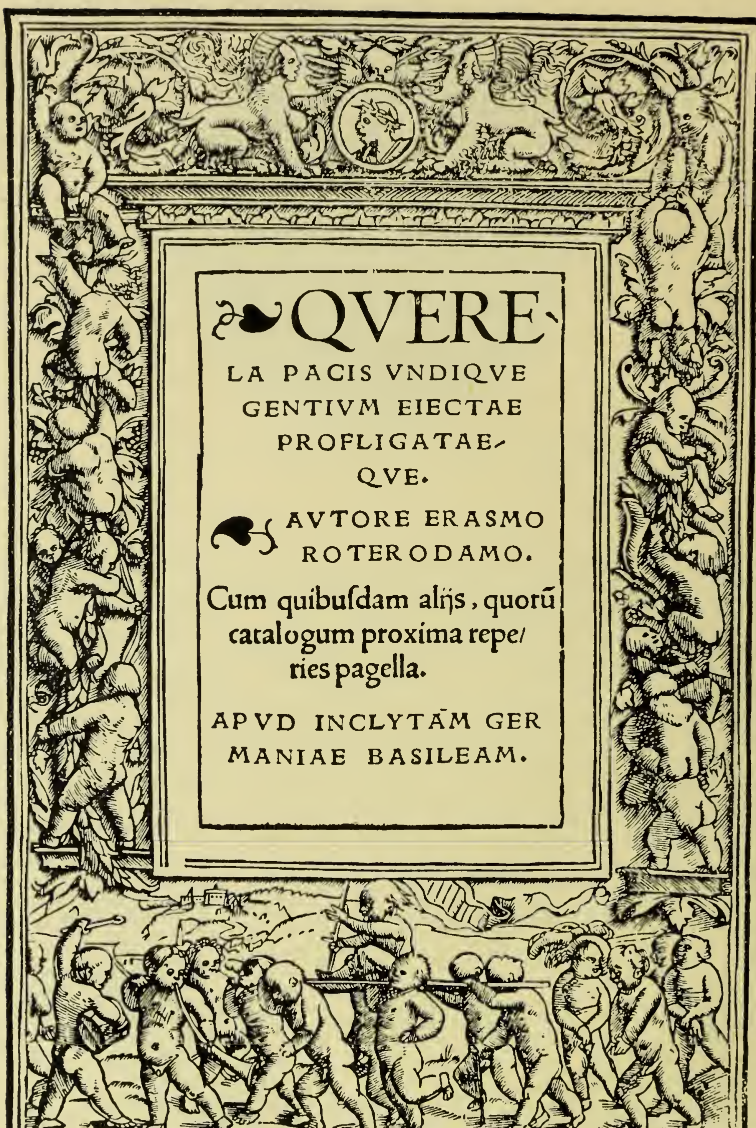
Ambrose Holbein. Hercules and Antæus. Pen-and-ink drawing, Karlsruhe

the burgomaster and his wife, although Ambrose approaches his brother in these, his masterpieces, more nearly than elsewhere. It is for this reason that, in our opinion, Hans could not possibly have been the author of the Herbster likeness.

The differences in the decorative studies of the two brothers are much more striking and this sort of work is especially valuable in estimating the drawings in the Moria because the latter are for the most part executed in pen and ink. Most of these works are of course merely woodcuts which reproduce the original drawings very inadequately, but since the artists were thus forced to confine themselves to what they considered essentials, the difference in the purpose of the two brothers is even more striking. These are borders for the title pages of books, decorations for chapter headings also for head-pieces, side-pieces and tail-pieces, as well as initials and printer's marks, the four decorative pen-and-ink drawings of Ambrose which have been preserved, and the painted panels of the architectural frames of the portraits. At this time it was the fashion to place small historical pictures on the lower edge of the border on a title page, especially such as had some connection with the book for which the border had been made and for which it was used for the first time. Occasionally similar scenes were also represented on the upper edge of the border. Or else the edges were decorated with Renaissance ornaments in which the child or the putto played an important part in the decorative scheme. The difference in treatment in the work of the brothers is apparent not only in the representation of the children, and of the ornaments showing tendrils, leaves, or candelabra, but also in the small historical pictures.

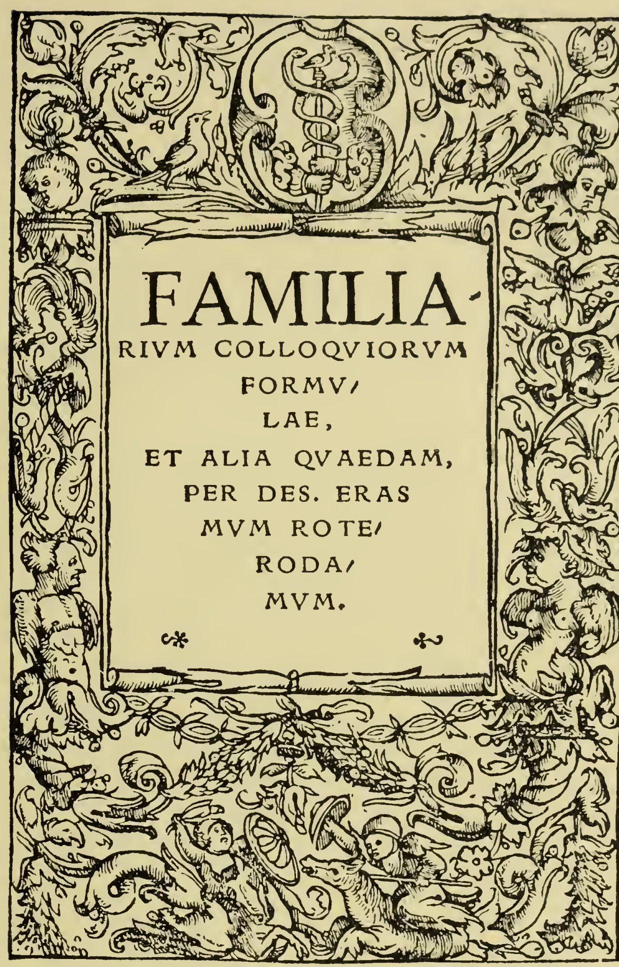
As a point of departure for the criticism of the early woodcuts of Hans Holbein, those executed in the winter of 1516–17, we may consider the following borders for quarto title pages:

1. with Mucius Scævola (Woltmann, Hans Holbein und seine Zeit, No. 223), cf. the detail from it, p. 37;
2. with a rounded niche in front of which a cloth is stretched (Woltmann, 234).



Hans Holbein the Younger

Border for a title page, 1517



Ambrose Holbein — Border for a title page, 1518

These two are signed. There are three others, more mature and more characteristic, which Woltmann ascribed to Ambrose. We reproduce in its entirety the border with a triumphal procession of children and two sphinxes holding a medallion (Woltmann, Ambrosius Holbein, No. 9), cf. the illustration on page 50. For further discussion see especially Butsch, Bücherornamentik der Renaissance, Leipzig und München 1878, where the signed borders are designated Hans H. on plates 41 and 45, and two others, Ambrosius, on plates 43 and 44.

Among Ambrose's drawings which cannot have been finished more than a year or a year and a half after the paintings in Stein and the marginal drawings of the Moria, the most characteristic are the following borders for folio title pages:

1. with the victory of Arminius over the Roman legions and the defamation of Apelles, marked respectively AH and 1517 (Woltmann, A. H. 7). Cf. the details reproduced from them p. 38;
2. with the representation of life at court (Woltmann, A.H. 8);
3. with boys in combat (Woltmann, A. H. 11);
4. with children as genii of the arts (Woltmann, A. H. 12). Cf. the detail from it, p. 52.



Ambrose Holbein
From the border for a title page, 1517 (W., A. H. 12)

We reproduce a later border entirely as it is especially characteristic of Ambrose's tendency and is farthest removed from the art of his brother; cf. the illustration on p. 51. Ambrose's decorations for books are almost all reproduced in W. Hes. A. Holbein, Strassburg, 1911. The most complete list by H. A, Schmid and H. Kœgler of all the woodcuts of both brothers is to be found in the Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon.

We may first consider the difference in the representation of the putto. Hans Holbein took into consideration the fact that the engraver who was available at that time would certainly obliterate all the more delicate lines and so he confined himself to essentials in simple contours with the introduction of one shadow; he merely indicated the eyes and the muscles with a few lines and the hair often not at all. In this way he made sure that the childish form would appear as a smoothly rounded figure that would stand out distinctly from the background or the foliage. It was just because of his fat little figure that the putto was taken up into the early Renaissance art in Italy, thence to be triumphantly introduced into Germany about 1500. Cf. pp. 42 and 44.

Ambrose, on the other hand, drew the outlines of the figures and especially the hair and the eyes with great care, and almost always indicated the eyebrows. This gives an expression that is precocious and mature rather than childlike. Furthermore, he often clothes the putto in garments with many folds or in richly decorated armor and the emphasis on these details takes away from the clearness of the principal lines when the drawing is reduced in size and badly executed. Cf. especially pp. 52 and 53.

In the woodcuts, then, Hans pays less attention to details than Ambrose does. The reason is not far to seek. In a painting the slightest variations in form can be indicated without reducing the sharpness of the image. When paintings are well executed the plastic effect of the work of the masters is enhanced. But the case is quite different in pen-and-ink drawings and even more so in the harsher treatment of the woodcuts, where a single line on the light side of the figure naturally appears as a shadow. It is therefore advisable to be sparing in the use of details if the proper plastic effect is to be attained. The result of such conscious economizing in the case of pen-and-ink work is really striking. In the work of Hans Holbein the figures stand out clearly from their background as a whole raised by means of homogeneous planes of light and of dark shadows in spite of any crudeness in the engraving. The picture as a whole, as it encloses the title, consists for the

most part of similar rounded figures and of ornaments or of architectural designs plastic in conception and in effect. Such is not the case with Ambrose, but then he did not consider it so important, certainly not as the main idea. His borders consist of sprightly play or else of a confusion of lines. Even when these lines represent tendrils, plants, children, and sea creatures, and when shadows accompany them the impression of the whole is far from that of a title page enclosed in a frame carved in relief. A confusion of lines could of course present a delightful contrast to the letters of the printed page, but a decoration of that sort would be in every particular a direct contradiction of the purposes of the younger brother. For the latter achieved distinctness in the whole composition not only by a sparing and well planned use of cross hatchings, but also by the directions of his lines. The decorative elements are disposed around a middle axis which distinctly appears as such, unless they form an architectural design. But in the work of Ambrose the middle axis is far less distinct and often disappears entirely. The latter is nearer the late Gothic taste than Hans and reminds one now and then of the brothers Hopfer in Augsburg. (See pp. 50 and 51, and cf. also the initials by Hans Holbein pp. 16 and 63 and by Ambrose p. 46.)



Ambrose Holbein

From the sketch for the sheath of a dagger, Basle

Whenever it is possible for us to examine the pen-and-ink work of Ambrose in its original condition we see that he was far from regarding the clearness so characteristic of Hans Holbein as of first importance. The recently discovered panelling in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin lacks the guiding lines and though only typical Renaissance forms are used, the general impression is very similar to the late Gothic ornamental etching of say Schongauer and his associates. The sketch for the sheath for a dagger in Basle is characteristic in a different way. It shows how little value this artist set on closely limiting the form of the putti, of the foliage, and of the ornaments in his drawing, and on leading the engraver to produce a clear picture that should be plastic in form. His cross hatching was difficult to bring out in the woodcut; the stroke served not only as a means but had a significance of its own and had he used fewer lines in all of his pen-and-ink drawings a clearer effect could have been achieved. Cf. especially the illustration above and also p. 43.

It is not difficult to recognize the underlying reasons for his method. He is less akin to the spirit of the Renaissance than his brother is. In Italy he chiefly admired the picturesque charm of the Renaissance architecture, and after a short flight to a higher plane he soon settled down, like all those of mediocre talent, into the mannerisms of his generation and a use of the wavy lines characteristic of their artistic production. His brother, on the other hand, swore allegiance to the spirit of a new day, as is apparent in his early work though in a more constrained manner than later.

In conclusion let us return to the paintings. In the ornaments appearing in these pictures we find exactly the same differences in the work of the two brothers though in a less conspicuous degree. Thus Hans painted the decoration with the shield and the two putti above the head of Burgomaster Meyer with tones of light and of shadow and almost without indicating the outlines; and in the case of the children he roughly sketched the curves of the heads without even indicating the hair. As in the case of the woodcut he cared only for the decorative effect of the plastic form. But in the putti above the head of Ambrose's blond boy all the details of the foliage, of the children's bodies, and of their hair are emphasized with outlines and with the shadows sketched in. While Ambrose cares little for the general effect, Hans pays great attention to it, even here (cf. pp. 44 and 45). It is no accident that there are also delicate shades of difference in the treatment of details.

In the case of the little historical pictures, with which both the brothers occasionally ornamented their title pages, the difference between them is even more apparent. Here also the work of Hans is distinguished from Ambrose's representations by the fact that every figure stands out distinctly from the background as a rounded form, in spite of all the constraint of the design and the clumsiness of the engraver who spoiled every head. How far this is from true in Ambrose's figures may be observed in the title page showing the calumny of Apelles. Again, the woodcut of the Basle edition of Thomas More's Utopia (March 1518) shows how little Ambrose was gifted in separating his masses by the use of light and of shade. (Cf. the illustration on p. 1 and on p. 37; see also illustr. on p. 38.)



From a copy of Lucas van Leyden
by Hans Holbein the Younger, Basle



From a sketch for a painting on glass
by Hans Holbein the Younger, 1517,
Brunswick

4. THE PARTICIPATION OF THE TWO BROTHERS IN THE ILLUSTRATION OF THE MORIA

If we make a thorough analysis of the drawings in the Moria in the light of our observations on the work of Ambrose and on the early work of Hans Holbein, we shall come to the conclusion that in spite of disparity in details the pictures are, with very few exceptions, distinguished by the qualities characteristic of the work of Hans Holbein. These include not only the sketches executed in India ink and those of the middle series but especially the hastily sketched drawings in brown ink in the first part of the text. We note not only the clearness in presentation but also the lines and the strokes of the brush that round the figures while outlining them.

Hans Holbein had not yet acquired a distinctive style, though we perceive the foreshadowing of his great talent and of the trend of his genius as well as of some of his characteristic practises. But not a single drawing among those not positively attributed to Hans Holbein presents the somewhat pronounced mannerisms of the authentic later work of Ambrose of this period, such as the Karlsruhe drawings or the Basle sheath. Nor is anything analogous to the pen-and-ink drawing in Berlin which is so characteristic that anything similar would easily be recognizable as his handiwork. There are several examples of correspondences between single motifs and woodcuts and drawings dating from 1517 and 1518, and these resemblances are frequently so striking that they would be conclusive

if taken by themselves. But the general character of the drawings is with few exceptions distinctly adverse to the authorship of Ambrose and indeed the correspondence exists principally in the drawings in which the authorship of Hans has not hitherto been challenged. Furthermore it was the word *Ate*, written by Myconius below Fig. 33, M and mistakenly considered to be the artist's signature which was conclusive in attributing the middle series to Ambrose.

It is not only in his sharpness of definition that we are pleased to note a foretaste of the famous illustrations of the Old Testament, the *Icones*, but also in a certain sort of caricature. The comic effect in the pictures intended to be ironical depends usually in this case also not on exaggeration such as we perceive in Oberländer and in Daumier but rather on a spirit of mischief. The figures are of course still out of proportion and often badly drawn. But this is also the case in Hans Holbein's serious work in his early period. And yet he hardly ever makes a nose longer or a paunch fatter than natural in striving for a comic effect. We are moved to laughter by the inimitable accuracy with which he strikingly reproduces a sudden movement or an unconscious expression and frequently this is achieved magically by nothing but a blot. Nevertheless the characters are all individually differentiated. The Moria who opens the discourse (Fig. 1, B) so comically in earnest is, to judge by appearances, a real girl who perhaps amused the artist with her impetuous movements and her droll answers. The two nurses (Fig. 5, Cv) are presented with great vividness as two entirely different individuals by means of a few blots. The folds of the dress and the expression on the face of the woman at the left in this particular picture, much more so than in many doubtful ones, is extremely like Ambrose's drawing of Pyramus and Thisbe in Karlsruhe, except that the characterization is far more lively and individual in the Moria. Even in the picture of the many-headed "Monster called the people" (Fig. 16, F 2) which is certainly not to be regarded as belonging to the most beautiful and the wittiest of the series, the various heads present a lively and ever changing picture of types from the people, similar to the independent portions of the drawing copied from Lucas van Leyden.

If then we can deny that Ambrose is the author of most of these pictures—principally because they exhibit more talent and less routine than any extant drawings known to have been executed by him—then we can establish the authorship of Hans Holbein in the doubtful pictures by their correspondence with the unchallenged drawings in the volume.

In the first place, the drawings that are hastily sketched in brown are often fresher and more alive than later pictures representing the same subjects. We need only compare a drawing like that of the physician (Fig. 20, Hv) with that of St. Bernard (Fig. 27, K2v), and that of the lawyer (Fig. 39, N3v) with that of the philosopher (Fig. 40, N 4) to be convinced of the truth of this statement.

Even if we assumed that two artists now buried in oblivion had surpassed Hans Holbein's early work in liveliness, a conjecture which though improbable is not impossible as such, we could not expect that they would have corresponded with Holbein in their conceptions to the degree that exists in these pictures. Every competent artist whether he succeeds or dies unknown is, it is agreed, a personality distinct from every other. In the expression of an emotion there is very little difference between the drawings attributed to the two unknown artists





The similarity brought about by foreshortening the face in quite dissimilar drawings in the Moria

and those that are undoubtedly Holbein's. The stupid expression on the face of the peasant worshipping at the image of St. Christopher (Fig. 26, K) is exactly the same as the one worn by the very learned Nicolas de Lyra playing a hand organ (Fig. 71, T 3 v) and by the fool into whose lap the goddess of fortune pours wealth (Fig. 63, S 2 v. Cf. also p. 62), and there is a striking similarity between the expression on the face of David admitting his folly to the Lord (Fig. 77, V 4 v) and these representatives of folly.

Occasionally we may find such correspondences in the rendering of a head when the pen, the ink, the illumination and even the subject are different which we can explain only as having been executed by the same hand. Compare for instance the face of the girl offering her breast to her lover (Fig. 11, D 4) with that of the man vainly offering money to the pious pauper (Fig. 79, X 2). (Cf. the illustrations above.)

The arrangement of the drapery naturally varies even in similar material with the degree of care in execution but in general it presents the same characteristic style. This manner stands midway between the rectilinear style of the Karlsruhe Crucifixion and the more flowing style as we meet it in Holbein's work after Lucerne. There is great similarity in the contemporary sign of the school, as may be noted in the illustrations on pp. 9 and 34. The arrangements of the folds in the man's sleeve and in his shirt is especially to be compared with the caricature of the sleeper (Fig. 35, M 3), and Myconius' wife with Penelope (Fig. 45, P). The similarity between these two representations of women has already been noted, but it is a mistake to conclude therefrom that the sign of the school, which has always been regarded as the work of Hans Holbein, was in whole or in part the work of Ambrose.

Our knowledge of other contemporary work of Hans Holbein attests his authorship of the great majority of the doubtful drawings.

The method of drawing children is like that in the decorative work of Hans Holbein in portraits and in woodcuts, and not that of Ambrose.

This is true in the case of all the doubtful drawings: the boy Jupiter being suckled by the goat Amalthea (Fig. 7, C 3 v), also in that of the schoolboy being chastised by his master (Fig. 37, M 4 v) and of the children of Niobe (Fig. 53, Q 3 v). The artist presents the fully rounded figure in a livelier style than that of Ambrose. The same characteristic is to be seen in the figure of Ate being scourged by Zeus (Fig. 33, M) and in the head of the chimera (Fig. 54, Q 4 v). It is especially remarkable that the pliancy of the flesh is indicated in Ate so cleverly and yet simply by the use of a few parallel strokes, though this is merely a violent episode

Ambrose Holbein



Christ vanquishes the devil

and there is no attempt to represent a voluptuous female form. We perceive the power of the hand which faithfully reproduces nature even when such fidelity is not required by the subject.

In the Niobe picture (Fig. 53, Q 3 v) the figure of Apollo argues against Ambrose. The male figures of the Moria have some common quality and betray the same knowledge of the muscular system and of anatomy, even when only suggested, and they differ in essential points from the naked figures by Ambrose in the woodcuts of 1517 and the drawing of 1518 showing Hercules and Antaeus. These figures include the "Monster called the people" (Fig. 16, F 2), Zeus scourging Ate (Fig. 33, M), Hephæstus and Zeus at the birth of Pallas (Fig. 47, P 2 v), Apollo in the Niobe picture (Fig. 53, Q 3 v) as well as Adam in the (unchallenged) picture of Paradise (Fig. 76, V 4). For in the Moria especially there is greater emphasis in the drawing of the edge of the thorax and the way he cuts off the straight abdominal muscle and the outline of the so-called upper thigh muscle than we find to be the case in Ambrose's work. We may next consider two woodcuts which H. Kœgler has lately established as the work of Ambrose: 1. Christ, clothed only in a loin cloth, standing in a landscape and overcoming the devil. This is a decoration for the title page of Der Geistliche Streit (The Spiritual Combat), by Ulrich Kraft, Strassburg, C. Kerner, May, 1517 (cf. the illustration on this page); 2. is at least probably by Ambrose, a Crucifixion, Basle, Jacob v. Pforzheim, May 1517. However we may judge the woodcuts it is not conceivable that the anatomy in the original drawing, before it was engraved, was emphasized in a similar manner as were those for the Moria. Besides in the marginal drawings the originals were more firmly drawn and were indeed a degree more artistic and more expressive than in the pen-and-ink drawing at Karlsruhe (cf. the illustration on p. 49).

We have no undisputed picture of Hans Holbein to be used for the comparison of Christ in the act of blessing (Fig. 44, O 4), which has been ascribed to Ambrose, but a painting by Ambrose will serve to prove its authorship: the figure of God



Hans Holbein the Younger

Detail from Carrying the Cross, Karlsruhe

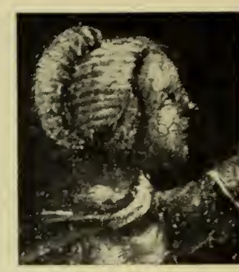
the Father giving a blessing, in the picture of Christ as Mediator in the Basle gallery. The drawing is so much livelier that it is hardly conceivable that the same artist could have executed both at the same period, and the painting cannot have been completed much earlier than the drawings for the Moria. (Cf. the illustration on p. 33.)

In the painting in Karlsruhe of Christ carrying the Cross we may see that the head of the man above Christ and to the right of Him was apparently drawn from the same model as the one used in the picture of the fool admiring himself in the mirror (Fig. 13, E 2 v, cf. also the illustrations on p. 36 and on this page, above). But the manner of drawing the trees in the landscape in this painting is exactly the same as in the drawings for the Moria. (Cf. among others Fig. 66, S 4.) The Karlsruhe painting is thus linked to the challenged drawings in the same way as with the other drawings.

Two women whom the artist used in the Zurich table appear again in the Moria. The woman beckoning to the fool (Fig. 23, I) is the lady on horseback on the right side of the table (cf. the illustration on p. 60); while the girl whom Gronovius embraces (Fig. 50, P 4) is a somewhat coarser representation of the lady being led to the net by the matchmaker at the left side of the picture showing the bird catching and the girl catching (cf. p. 60). But the joyous fool (Fig. 21, H 3 v) also came from the table, where he is one of the figures clothed in red who play the clown in the tournament scene (cf. the illustration on p. 60). The same model seems to have been used again on the table in the center in the picture of the sleeping tradesman whose basket has been emptied by the monkeys. And finally, the hunting scene on the right side of the table reappears in a reverse position in Fig. 24, I 3 v. (Cf. also the illustration on p. 39). The artist could probably not have finished the illustrations for the Moria in ten days with eight pictures a day to finish on the average if he had not made use of his earlier sketches.



Hans Holbein the Younger. Head of the woman led to the net by the matchmaker, Zurich Table



Hans Holbein the Younger
Head of the woman riding, Zurich Table

St. Bernard too (Fig. 27, K 2 v) seems to have been copied from another picture.[1]

Even in the copy after Lucas van Leyden (p. 41) where Hans Holbein frequently used men from his vicinity as substitutes for the Dutch figures of the original the resemblance in the individual figures, though they are bewilderingly alike, is not so striking as is the kindred conception with the authentic and the doubtful drawings of the Moria and with the early Lucerne sketches.

The figure of the lawyer (Fig. 39, N 3 v) corresponds to the young man walking down the steps at the left side in the painting Christ before the people (Ecce

[1] The paintings in Zurich are laid on very thick in impasto on a black ground and the technique also makes a comparison with pen-and-ink work very difficult. Besides, in their present condition they can hardly be reproduced photographically. However, the illustrations should be convincing. It was found necessary to reproduce the hunt from an engraving, and the comparison of the drawings with these paintings when made from the original in Zurich showed resemblances which it was impossible to record from the reproduction in spite of several unsuccessful efforts. But more cogent than the resemblance of the models is the similarity in expression and in movement, and also in instantaneous poses. But the slightest loss of shade alters the expression of the face and even of the silhouette.



Hans Holbein the Younger. One of the fools from the tournament, Zurich Table



Hans Holbein the Younger. From the sketch for the picture called Leaina before the judges, Basle

homo) (p. 55); Zeus and Hephæstus (Fig. 47, P 2 v) form a group like the figures of Christ and an officer in the center of the painting (p. 41); and Nicolas de Lyra and the fool (Fig. 70, T 2 v) can be found in the heads of the two aged men in the group in the foreground of the picture reproduced in the illustrations on page 62.

It is not difficult to recognize the hand that worked on the Moria and on this copy of Lucas van Leyden as the one that executed the only remaining sketch for one of the historical pictures on the façade in Lucerne, which we here reproduce in part. The presiding officer of the court of justice before whom Leaina, the beloved of the tyrannicides, refuses to give testimony resembles Zeus in the act of scourging Ate (Fig. 33, M), except that in the latter we note that the artist is more mature and has learned to emphasize what he considers the important points.

The conjecture made by good old Jacob Clauser that other artists "meddled" with the pictures cannot however be entirely rejected. For among the drawings ascribed to Ambrose we find one (the nuptial couch of Vulcan, Fig. 43, O v) that is strikingly confused, the drawing is much more slovenly than the majority of the others and, what is unusual in Hans' pictures, it is drawn in two different brown tones. The richly decorated bedstead, especially the putto above the head of it, is really so characteristic of Ambrose's most familiar work that this drawing may be ascribed to him, as of his early period, rather than to Hans Holbein. Not that his contribution was an embellishment, however. There is a notable lack of liveliness in the expression of the faces such as Hans succeeded in bestowing on his smallest creatures, and the artist certainly missed the point of this episode from Homer. This may of course have been the fault of the interpreter, as Myconius did not at that time have full command of Greek. At the least an artist like Hans would have made a droll picture to illustrate the story. Another picture, not far away in the text, Æneas throwing a sop to Cerberus (Fig. 52, Q 2), is much less distinct in drawing and much less distinguished. The head of the hero presents a certain family resemblance to Ambrose's other mythological figures, and it is possible that he drew this picture also. It is however significant that these two pictures form a distinct contrast to the others in this part of the book, which are mostly attributed to Ambrose. They are certainly not characteristic examples of his work, and if his collaboration in Stein on the Rhine is ever established, we



Hans Holbein the Younger. Heads from the copy after Lucas van Leyden and from the Moria

may agree that this slight addition to the Moria is only probably his, hardly more than possibly his, in fact.

Finally, in the picture of the ass confronting the harper (Fig. 55, R) we note a style that is alien to the other drawings. The plume on the knight's hat reminds us of the Romanticists. Perhaps this is a contribution from an obscure young artist.

Among the remaining drawings we may note the somewhat strange effect of the Dance of Polyphemus (Fig. 10, D 2 v). The drapery of the principal figure exhibits the stiff lines and the angular silhouette that are found in late woodcuts by Ambrose. Bacchus (Fig. 9, D v) as well as the disputing theologs (Fig. 73, V v) though unimportant, are probably by Hans Holbein. They are weak but could not be supressed because they were incorporated in a valuable book.

There are thus seventy-seven or seventy-eight drawings which we may regard as by Hans Holbein, certainly all the more important ones. They present an interesting collection of examples of the early work of an Old Master such as we do not often find.



The unvarying expression of folly in the drawings in the Moria

5. THE GENESIS OF THE DRAWINGS

IT is not really so difficult to explain the great divergence in the three groups of drawings. Holbein commenced his work without having any definite plan in mind, and though at first he certainly had no clear conception of the Moria as a literary masterpiece he gradually became more interested in it. The extensive knowledge of ancient literature which is displayed in these drawings is much greater than could be credited to Hans at this time when he was still a young man of the age of the average college graduate. Even the rising generation of Classical philologists would require a commentary in order to understand Glareanus' Hymn in praise of the Swiss Confederacy and the Moria of Erasmus, and we may assume that Holbein had not, like Glareanus, Myconius, and later the latter's pupil Thomas Platter, spent the years preceding this work as a wandering scholar in the pursuit of Latin and Greek. On the contrary, it is much more likely that Holbein had dedicated himself principally or perhaps exclusively to his own art. For at this time he already possessed a routine in his own province such as the best workers of to-day acquire usually only after years of practise, and in the 16th century it could not have been accomplished more quickly, even by a genius.

The distinguished Holbein scholar Salomon Vögelin, in a study on the humanists who gave Holbein an introduction to Classical culture (Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft, Bd. X, 1887), proves conclusively that the drawings exhibit considerable scholarly knowledge in that field. All the examples cited by Vögelin are not equally cogent, it is true, but his thesis is on the whole correct and proves his point. There are others that he might have included which are omitted either intentionally or inadvertently. We shall cite only a few of his observations.

Holbein presents the chimera (Fig. 54, Q 4 v) as described by Horace, although Erasmus quotes only the first few words of the passage and does not indicate that they begin the opening line of the *Ars Poetica.* He must therefore either have recognized the quotation and have looked it up, or else some one else did so for him. Where Folly says that through her agency men are better pleased to possess a daub than an original painting by Apelles or by Zeuxis we find the picture of a man seated before an easel painting the figure of a nude woman (Fig. 32, L 3 v). Holbein was obviously showing Apelles at work on his famous masterpiece, Venus rising out of the sea. A note by Myconius establishes the correctness of this conjecture. We need not assume, however, that Holbein was familiar enough with the work of the ancient authors to have read of this Greek painting.

Indeed the erudition revealed by Myconius in his notes on the Moria is very creditable to the young schoolmaster, and shows further the courage and studiousness of his precocious generation which accomplished such wonders in art and in science. But it is impossible to impute learning of a similar character to Holbein, and we must conclude that *he required the services of an interpreter.* And it was probably a desire to be introduced to the intellectual circle of the humanists that led the artist to seek the acquaintance of the schoolmaster.

Iselin probably hit upon the correct explanation when he said that Myconius ran through the book in several evening sessions and that "in all probability" he translated and explained the text to Holbein and then "inspired by humor" Holbein took his pen and made a considerable number of drawings.

A few examples will demonstrate how little Holbein planned the series of pictures. First of all, we note that the distribution of the drawings is very uneven. The first part of the oration, which celebrates the benefactions of Folly, was originally decorated with only eighteen pictures, which with the later additions finally became twenty-three in number. The second part, only a little longer than the first, which portrays the principal supporters of Folly, and closes with Biblical and other authoritative literary evidence, contains fifty-nine sketches. And in the sections where the various classes in the community are discussed every page has at least one illustration and sometimes two.

But chance was often the decisive factor. Especially in the first part we can see clearly that a drawing occurs where a witty phrase took fire, so to speak, or perhaps when the turn of a sentence caught the attention of the artist and turned it to a comic situation or a ridiculous figure. The pictures by no means always illustrate the principal thought at the point in the text where they stand, frequently they refer to an allusion or an expression or a word which occurs in the text. And sometimes the connection is even looser. Where Folly boasts that without her gracious favor no marriages would be made and but few would last if the husband were not trusting or stupid the artist presents the furious countenance of a man (Fig. 12, E 2) in whose mind a black suspicion arises as the cuckoo screams at him. In this picture we have exactly what Folly boasts she can usually prevent. In other cases too we note that no pictorial elucidation of the text is secured. Where Folly asserts that the people can be led only by means of childish fables and inventions, the picture shows two grooms pulling the tails of two horses (Fig. 15, F v). The orator referred in the text among others to "a comedy of horses' tails," and the commentary explains the reference (cf. above, p. 21).

At the beginning, where Folly declares that she will improve on the new sophists, we learn from Lister's commentary how the word *sophist* acquired a bad meaning. Holbein does not here portray the folly of these persons, as one might expect, but draws a man walking on thorns, the sophist in the midst of tribulations (Fig. 2, B 2). Again, the picture of the goat Amalthea suckling the boy Jupiter (Fig. 7, C 3 v) is in the wrong place and belongs on C and C v, before Fig. 5 (cf. p. 19, note). The same is true of Figure 33, M, Zeus and Ate, which should come between Figs. 9 and 10 (cf. p. 24, note 3).

It is perhaps easier to recognize the existence of a closer connection between the pictures and the text in the second part, where the different classes of men are discussed. It was this section of the Moria, according to Huizinga, that exercised the greatest influence on the men of that time and was instrumental in convincing the educated world that conditions were unbearable and thus prepared the way for the upheaval that was on its way. This part is also more in the vein of the satire of that day. It was thus that Sebastian Brant in his Ship of Fooles (Narrenschiff) in 1494 and Holbein himself after 1523 in his Dance of Death (Totentanz) depicted the perversity of the world by portraying the conduct and the activities of the various classes of men. Though other passages may seem to us of to-day

to be more profound and independent in thought, they were of the future, and were not so impressive in the days of Erasmus as those that struck Holbein and Myconius as revealing conditions existing in their own time. Where these begin the illustrations are more homogeneous. But here also, scattered among the caricatures of theologs and of monks we find pictures that illustrate the meanings of single words, such as the bed of Vulcan, so called (Fig. 43, O v), Penelope at her loom (Fig. 45, P), and Atlas carrying the heavens (Fig. 46, P v) also later the chimera (Fig. 54, Q 4 v). The interpretation of a word new to the artist was evidently an influence here also.

It is obvious however that the purpose which the artist and the owner of the book had in mind in regard to the illustrations shifted somewhat in the course of their labors. It is also quite clear that the external conditions under which the drawings were made underwent a change. At the beginning the pictures grew out of the conversation of the artist with Myconius. The first were drawn in the midst of their talk; perhaps in a circle consisting of the schoolmaster and several other young scholars gathered around a lamp during those wintry days, just as many of the pictures in the Munich *Fliegende Blätter* which were drawn on the spot illustrate a jest that was made in the public house under the inspiration of the jolly company. The majority of the first set of the marginal drawings is not superior to what, presupposing sufficient talent, might have been produced in the course of a general discussion.

Gradually the plan of work was altered and then came a change in the method of illustration. When he reached the chapter containing the criticism of the classes and professions, Holbein considered the advisability of portraying systematically, as Dürer did in his Ship of Fools, the representatives of the various classes of men and of thus recommending himself to the publishers.

Finally, Holbein took Myconius' volume home with him in order to finish his work with more care. This is evidently the reason why all the pictures after page 129 (R) are done in India ink. After Q 4 v the marginal notes by Myconius cease which until then he had entered immediately after the drawings were finished and scattered among them. There are two more pictures in the brown ink, the chimera (Q 4 v) and the ass confronting the harper (R), and two leaves on which Myconius had marked in red the passages in the text on which he wished to comment (R v and R 2) and those are the last. The few manuscript notes in the latter part of the book may be explained as later additions. But towards the end the artist was able to work alone at the illustrations without comments or assistance as here many of his drawings represent classes and persons whose names were indicated in the commentary or in the text or were easy to find, and the last twenty-four pictures might have been made in that fashion with little or no help.

Perhaps Holbein was not pleased with the cooperation of other artists, especially the picture of the ass and the harper (Fig. 55, R), as this and two others on the preceding leaves, Vulcan's couch (Fig. 43, O v) and Æneas and Cerberus (Fig. 52, Q 2) are the only drawings that are certainly not by Hans Holbein.

Or perhaps the reason Myconius' remarks ceased at this place was that his right hand was hurt on the night of the twenty-ninth of December 1515 or because the wound became infected a few days later. For we remember that he fought

the scoundrels who attacked his house in his absence and demolished his schoolroom, and this fracas took place immediately after the picture of the hunt (Fig. 24, I 3 v) was finished, as Myconius noted in his own hand beside the drawing (cf. above, p. 22). It is also stated on the first leaf of the Moria that the illustrations for the book were executed in ten days and then exhibited to Erasmus. All of these statements are thoroughly reliable, as they were made by the owner of this precious volume for his own use, and we may assume that they are correct as far as the majority of the drawings is concerned. It is possible, however, that Holbein drew some of the pictures after these notes had been made; in one case it is indeed quite certain that he did so (Fig. 34, M v). Cf. p. 34 ff. And so we may conclude that Holbein finished on an average eight pictures every day, and in a few cases only seven, if we may deduct a few drawings that were made later and assume that he worked at about the same rate every day. In that event Holbein began the drawings on December the twenty-seventh 1515, on the twenty-ninth he was at work on the hunting scene (Fig. 24, I 3 v), on the thirty-first he had completed the lawyer (Fig. 39, N 3 v), the last of the hasty sketches, and after the New Year he finished the more carefully executed brown pictures and the black ones in five days more. This is of course only a rough calculation. It is quite possible, on the other hand, that he finished more of the hasty sketches in a given time than he could have done of the more careful work; or perhaps the better drawings went more quickly because he worked over them all day and not only at night, as he did with the first set. So that our calculations must be approximately correct as the manuscript notes which Myconius made at the same time as Holbein was making his drawings are in part dated. The last of the notes dated 1515 comes between Figs. 43 and 44 and the first of the two dated 1516, between Figs. 46 and 47. At all events Holbein was not much farther than Fig. 39 by the end of 1515. After Fig. 56, that is, on the seventh day of his work, the accompanying marginal notes cease altogether.

Later, in Zurich or in Lucerne Myconius entered notes in the book, among which we may include the remarks on the women lighting candles to the Virgin (M 2) in which he mentions his visit to Basle in 1515 (see p. 25, note).

The notes which refer to Erasmus were probably written in the early part of 1516 as the events mentioned in them must have been recent. In the spring of 1516 Erasmus left for the Netherlands and Myconius moved to Zurich the same year. Neither returned to Basle for a lengthy stay until 1535 or 1536. They cannot have met at all in the interval except in passing. The remark at the familiar portrait of Erasmus (Fig. 64, S 3) is proof enough that the fortunate owner of the book was standing beside the great scholar when the latter examined the drawings. The note was probably made directly after the occurrence it records.

The remark made by Erasmus on seeing his portrait was that if he looked as young as he appeared in the picture he would find himself a wife. This was reported to Holbein, for among the supplementary pictures in the earlier part of the book in India ink we may find a second portrait of the scholar, though strange to say, no one has hitherto recognized it as such. Here we see him as slightly older and more like the portraits of him made by Holbein in 1523 as the philosopher who turns to look at a pretty woman and so walks into the market woman's egg basket (Fig. 3, B 3). This represents Holbein's answer to the scholar's criticism.

Another circumstance that makes this theory tenable is that the picture does not illustrate the text. We find mention of those who pretend to great wisdom in word and in bearing, it is true, but Midas is used to illuminate that point. This second portrait, as the setting would argue, was of course not intended for the eye of Erasmus, and the style of it shows that it was a later addition, executed shortly after the other drawings.

Erasmus appears from the later portraits by Holbein to have been a scholar of cold and superior mien but at the same time he was by no means a woman hater and appreciated beauty and charm. He expressed regret that when he was in Venice he did not meet the women relatives of his friends; and he praised the English custom because the women also greeted a guest with the kiss of hospitality, and the French inns as more attractive because they had charming maidens to serve the guests. His correspondence with the beautiful daughter of Thomas More shows that even in his old age he enjoyed intellectual companionship with the other sex. Even more evident in another respect is his letter to Ulrich von Hutten in 1519 about More, where Erasmus records with the same objective candor his friend's love life before marriage as he does his love for animals and for literature. The anger of Erasmus at the individuals who caused him to enter the monastery may have had its roots in his need or love for friendship and for domestic happiness.

Hans Holbein the Younger



The later version of the portrait of Erasmus in the Praise of Folly (enlarged).

6. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MARGINAL DRAWINGS IN THE LIFE OF HOLBEIN

The most remarkable quality in this series of drawings made by a young wandering artist is their delicacy, especially since it presupposes, as likewise later in the Dance of Death and in the decorative initials of 1523 and 1524, unusual physical characteristics, as well as practise in the manipulation of the pen that is striking at so early an age. It is very difficult to reproduce Holbein's most delicate drawings with a modern steel pen even with the aid of a magnifying glass. We may thus observe the beginnings of the Master's art that introduced the delicate lines in woodcuts imitated especially in France in the 16th century. And Holbein was distinguished later not only for great monumental works of art but for miniatures and for sketches for the smallest and most delicate pieces of jewelry.

Even greater, of course, is his art of delineation which is apparent in the representation of the various classes and also elsewhere. Holbein has left us a whole portrait gallery of the Basle of his day. We need mention only the poet (Fig. 38, N v), the philosopher (Fig. 40, N 4), especially the mathematician, astrologer would be more exact (Fig. 41, N 4 v), and towards the close the theologian with the fool (Fig. 70, T 2 v), the pious old gentleman giving alms (Fig. 78, X), St. Bernard absent mindedly drinking the oil (Fig. 80, X 2 v).

But the way he brings out the difference in texture in the rich stuffs whether ermine or silk, in which he clothes his figures is little short of marvelous, as also the skill with which he draws tapestry or mosaic. The figures stand out distinctly as units, showing Holbein as the master of objective representation. This impression we received earlier in the trick pictures of the Zurich table where we find an old playing card of the 15th century reproduced as distinctly as we expect it to-day in an art publication, though it was very rare in those days. The finely executed Swiss landscapes which are sometimes found as backgrounds are also charming. In the painting at Karlsruhe we may see pleasing mountain scenery treated in a strikingly lively manner, and the Alps appear in other pictures. We finally begin to have an idea of the original appearance of the early borders for titles of 1516 and 1517 before the clumsy engravers of that day began their systematic work of destruction in executing these delicate drawings.

This precocity of Holbein's explains his immediate recognition in a city so rich in art as Basle and her gift to him at the early age of twenty-three of the most honorable commission to be had in the decoration of the assembly room of the town hall.

But it is really only in the ironic and humorous representations that we find talents that can never be acquired but at most improved and that more than any other kind of gift testify to extraordinary aptitude: the ability to capture instantaneously unintentional and fugitive motions, the skill in letting each stroke of the pen, each blot vivify and suggest the living creature. In the final analysis this aptitude is conclusive in settling the question of authorship, the power of suggestion in this high degree is in all the arts the touchstone of genius. The ironical way in which humans are treated in the Moria presupposes a refinement that is not often found even in great artists, and would hardly have been possible among those

of the older generation of Dürer's day. Of course a very clever performance may be contained in witty exaggeration. A method of presentation that overemphasizes neither form nor expression and still attains its object is, however, exactly Holbein's way, for it is a characteristic of the extraordinary quality of his astonishing portraits of a later day that gave them their unique place among the masterpieces of portraiture of all time. It need not therefore cause great surprise to find a series of interesting portraits in these early marginal drawings.

Holbein later far surpassed this youthful performance. In the first place, the proportions of his human bodies in these drawings, like those in the Carrying the Cross in Karlsruhe, are very unequal and often quite incorrect. The astonishing errors in drawing disappear gradually from the work of Holbein perhaps six or eight years later than this, after his first Italian trip and his decorations for the town hall, perhaps even because of this monumental piece of work. In view of the difficulties in presenting the human form experienced by an artist such as Holbein, we can understand why Dürer so early, just as Holbein was beginning his work, set himself industriously to study human proportions. In Holbein's work of 1521 and 1522, the time of the monumental paintings, the conformation of the human figure is better and more distinctly brought out than before, even in the rendering of garments that cover a great part of the body. He achieves more expressive and more mobile human beings and their clothing is now actually "the echo of the form."

And especially our artist learned but gradually to arrange a painting containing several figures, that is the historical composition, more clearly and with more expression. Holbein was only just beginning to understand this question when he produced the Karlsruhe Crucifixion and the pictures in the Moria, e. g. the women lighting candles to the Virgin (Fig. 34, M v), the judges in a trial for heresy (Fig. 73, V v), Folly descending from the pulpit (Fig. 82, X 4), Erasmus walking into the market woman's egg basket (Fig. 3, B 3). But we may observe how the artist endeavors to foreshorten the ground to a much greater degree than his father was able to do, in order that his figures may stand more firmly on their feet, how he guides the observer's glance into the depths by the use of oblique lines and how he begins to produce motion by introducing contrasts.

The paintings of the façade in Lucerne and of the town hall in 1521 and 1522, the illustrations for the Bible of 1523 and not least the small initials on which greatly foreshortened figures are to be found these are the stepping stones to the Dance of Death and to the later masterpieces of the art of composition such as the house "Zum Tanz:"

In the Dance of Death we may note in still another way an advance over the astonishing early work in the marginal drawings in the Moria. When Holbein made these drawings he was still far from being able to plan a series of illustrations comparable in artistic structure to the literary masterpiece they adorn. In the Totentanz, however, it is clear that the series of pictures was carefully planned as a whole, even though the composition as originally conceived by the artist was altered and it is no longer possible to establish it exactly. A certain equitable distribution of the worst fate among clerics and laity, among men and women should not be overlooked, as we recognize also that there is a climax toward the end.

This satire by Erasmus was one of the most powerful stimulations for the criticism of his contemporaries that Holbein uttered in his Dance of Death. Thus we may consider his remarkable early work in the Moria to have been in a two-fold sense a preparation for his masterpiece.



Hans Holbein the Younger. The Star-gazer, from the Dance of Death

V. DOCUMENTS

ORIGINAL TEXT
OF THE LETTERS OF JACOB CLAUSER
TO BASILIUS AMERBACH

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OF BASLE

G II 16 AND G^2 I 34

LETTER FROM JACOB CLAUSER TO BASILIUS AMERBACH
G II 16. Fol. 169 (1578)

Mÿn underthenig willig dienst seÿ eüch jederzÿtt beuor. Erwürdiger Innsonders Günstiger Lieber Herr Doctor. Erstlich mÿner Reiss halben bin ich frügg gnug khomen / vnd so ich schon früger khom̄en were / so were ess glÿch / dan ich von dess gruschs wegenn verhindertt muss sÿn / iedoch so will ich Lugen daz ich sÿn khein schaden hab etc. Dennoch Günstiger lieber Herr ich hab alle gar wol verrichtt dess Erasmj Narrÿbuch halben / wie Holbein darÿn grissen / vnd soferr ich eüwers hette / wollt ich ess vnderstan zu überkhom̄en doch hab ich jm ettwass verheissen zu Malen so ist er gutt willig vnd mir ess zugseitt. vff dissmal weiss ich nütt wÿtters. Svnder daz ich von hertzen wünsch gsuntheitt vnd langs läben Amen.

An̄no 1578. A. E: Erwürd dienstwilliger

JACOB CLAUSER
Maler jnn Mülhusen.

LETTER FROM JACOB CLAUSER TO BASILIUS AMERBACH
G² I 34. Fol. 3 (Aug. 20th, 1578)

Erwürdiger Innsonders günstiger Lieber Herr Doctor eüwer früntlich zuschrÿben an mich / ist mir vff den 19 tag diss Augsten worden / welches mich hertzlich wol erfröuwtt hatt daz eüwer demutt / mir als kleinfügem / sich so fil bemügt hatt zu schrÿben / die wÿl vnd aber eüwer E: W: jnn mÿnem schrÿben verstanden / wie vnser Abred gestaltett / daz alless zum Nutzlichisten vnd besten flÿss dess buchs halben verricht werden mög dess selbigen eüch zu berichtten erforderrt / vnd ist dem also / dass erstlich alss ich jnn die herberg khom̄en / hatt mich Herr Daniel früntlich heissen wilchum sÿn vnd mitt mir gässen / mir allerleÿ sÿnss vnfals ertzelt Hieneben hatt ess sich khum̄lich geben / daz ich jnn dess Buchs halben gfraget hatt er mir selbs antzeigtt / wie er also eins habe / vnd der Holbein hab vil mitt sÿner hand darÿn zeichnett vnd von hand grissen / vnd er wölliss wir werden lossen / ich söll nun on sorg sÿn / er ist sÿdhar eben ein mal vff der gassen zu mir khom̄en / vnd mir gsagt ess müss mir werden ich muss mich nun an einem fÿrtag zu jm verfügen er gadt nitt vil vss / vnd ist bÿ sÿner schwiger / wan man jm noch fragt so meint sÿ man wöll jm geltt höuschen / ich will aber wol gůtte glegenheitt finden vnd der sachen recht thůn dan ich hab daz bůch noch

nitt gsächen / er = sagt er wöl mirs lieber gunnen / ess werd sonst etwo an galgen khomen so bald aber mir wirtt / vnd mÿn bub sonst vffen muss farwen holen so will ichs wol ÿnmachen vnd eüch zůschicken / weiss aber nitt ob er dess anderen daz ir hand begertt oder nitt / daz khan ich eüch wol zů schrÿben / vnd wass ouch wÿtter von nötten ist / vff diss mal weiss ich nütt dan grüssend mir Efersÿn vnd Her Doctor Theoder / mÿn gvatter Bartlj Mathÿs gÿger. vnd wer vnss gůtz gundt. etc.

Actum den 20 tag Augsten A° 1578.

Gott der Herr Bewar eüch jnn all weg zu seel vnd lÿb Amen.

A: Eüwer vndertheniger gethrüwer vnd dienstwilliger

JACOB CLAUSER Maler.

jnn Mülhusen jm pfrundhuss.

LETTER FROM JACOB CLAUSER

G II 16. Fol. 163

Mÿn früntlichen grůss und willig dienst sÿe eüch jedertzÿt beuor. Erwürdiger Innsonders günstiger Herr Doctor / Gott der Herr erhalt mich noch bishar jnn zimlicher gsuntheitt / der welle eüch vnd mich wÿtter Innsgsontheit vnd wolfarht erhalten Amen. — — —

Wÿtter Günstiger lieber Herr wüssend daz ich daz bůch gsähen bÿ Herr Danielen / vnd sind fil gůtter Holbeinischer grisner böslin darin fil gůtz lächerlich ding / vnd gůtt zů khennen daz der holbein selbs mitt sÿner Hand grissen / vnd aber vnderwÿlen ein anderer auch darÿn geflicktt. Und aber ess hatt ein Grössere form̄ / vnd ist ouch jm 25 Jar thrukt vnd auch dur den Alten frobenj / ist aber noch ein bůch darbÿ / ist ouch Lathÿn / ich han den thüttel nitt dörffen abschriben ich han sonst gfürcht er mercks daz ich einem anderen woll ess ist vorhin dess altten Herr Meconius gsÿn / der sols uff ein zÿtt offenlich glesen han / der hatt ad marginem so gar fil gůtter pösslin darneben gschriben / daz er mirss nitt gen will biss erss abgschriben hatt / vnd hatt daz schonn daz ir mir gschiktt hand / ich muss jm ietz eben vorgan er hatts lang nitt jn handen ghan / vnd gfaltt jmm / aber ich můss jn abconterfetten / ich muss am firttag mich zu jm thun / vnd jm zlieb gan wo er wil ich erzürn in sonst ich hoff ich wöls wol von jm über khon / wan er ein drunk überkom̄ptt wo er ist / so ist er so wunderbar / daz er unwerd ist / er ist bÿ sÿner schwiger / aber wan er Nüchter ist so ist er gar ein fÿner gschickter Mañ.

Lieber Herr Wüssend daz ich ein gross werck mach / vnd wan ich zů euch kom̄ ein Nüwe frische fisierung machen Můss von wegen dess daz ichs nitt aller dingen mach wie die fisierung / zudem hab ich nitt wÿl ein Rechte fisierung zů Machen / hab auch nur ein halb theil gemacht zů dem wan ich schon ein flÿssige

fisierung hett / so khöntt ich iren uff dem grüst nitt schonen daz sÿ nitt Maculiert wurd / vnd aber ich wil eüch gliepts Gott ein frische subere Machen / wie daz recht werck ist. Uff dismal weiss ich nütt / dan Grüssen mir Herr Doctor Teoder vnd Doctor Samuel Grÿneus vnd eüwere vetteren / vnd Efersÿna. Hiemit bewar eüch jn langer gsuntheitt / ich möchtt wol eüwer buw sähen.

A: Eüwer Er: W:

Dienstwiliger JACOB CLAUSER M.

jm pfrundhuss zmülhusen.

LETTER FROM JACOB CLAUSER TO BASILIUS AMERBACH
G II 16. Fol. 165 (October 24th, 1578)

Mÿn underthenig willig dienst / samptt mÿnem früntlichen gruss / jedertzÿtt beuor. Erwürdiger Innsonders Günstiger lieber Herr / ich hette eüch lieber langest gschriben so bin ich noch nitt habend an dess stattschrÿbers bůch / wie woll ess mir fürgwüss zu gseitt / vnd aber er ist etlichmal überfeld gsÿn / wañ ich zwüschen mÿnē gschefftten mich zu jm dätte / vnd ich mich willens nitt lang bÿ jm zu sÿn oder sumen / khöntte ich nitt vō jm khom̄en ich wette jn dan ertzürnen / so ess aber sontag / oder sonst khomliche zÿtt begibtt / so můss ich ein zech oder zwo an jnn Henkgen / dan ess ist meer wertt / der Holbein hatt gar vil darÿn grissen / ess hatt herr Oswald Meconius / vil darneben gschriben / daz will er daruss schrÿben / sonst woltt ichs langest haben / aber ich můss jnn jnn gůtten hulden / dergstaltten haben daz ich jm auch willfare / vnd daz Nechstmal daz ich zů jm kom̄en / will ich / jnn betten wañ ess sach sÿe / das er nitt wÿl habe abzuschrÿben / so woll ichs jm / suber abschrÿben lossen damitt ichs bekhom̄e / will ichs gern thůn / ess sind gůtte pösslj darinnen die werdend eüch wol gfallen / Demnoch wüssend daz mir ietz bÿ vier wochen nitt wol gsÿn ist / allein daz ich mich noch bishar dess ligens erwertt / Gott wöll daz ess gar nachlass / dan daz vilfaltig hoch stÿgen mich sur ankhomptt / ouch Etliche vngstüme wetter / offttmal verhindertt / vnd zum theill ouch mÿn vngehorsamer sun / der mir vil khöntt abnem̄en / vnd mich seer übel bekhümertt / ich khan jnn Nienen mer hin mitt mir Nem̄en / ich woltt daz er ein Herren hett er wil nütt vmb mich gäben / weder mitt gütte / noch mitt böse / Noch můss ich mich lÿden biss ich gar ferttig bin / ich bin ietz vff dem vndertheil / da khom̄en jn daz gehüss / oder jnfassung 5 bilder / vff einer sÿtten den fulkhanus / vnd orfeus vff der Andren sÿtte justitia prudentia / Magnitudo / ist jede sÿtten 30 schůch hoch vnd 26 schůch breitt ist den 20 October 6 wochen gsÿn daz ich han angfangen Malen die überge erste / vnd beste zÿtt / bin ich durch Rüstmeister vnd Mure(r) gehindertt worden. vnd hab sÿ für vnd für drÿben müssen / ess het sonst Nieman dartzů than / vnd hab wÿtt vō mÿnem lusimentt zu mÿner Arbeit / vnd můss mich recht lÿden / ess hatt

mir Meister Mathis Gÿger früntlich zu geschriben / wie das eüwer buw / vnder dem dach sÿe nitt weiss ich ob daz dach daruff ist oder nitt / vnd sÿ ein zÿtt stillgstanden. Ess verlangtt mich seer zu eüch / wette Gott / daz ess durch Meister Daniel gwelpt wurde / so hett ich hoffnung ess wurd etwass Rechts daruss werden vnd nimptt mich ouch wunder / ob ess vil heittere jnn der lÿberÿ verschlach wÿtter hab ich vernom̄en / der Abel sÿe gwandlet / vnd Nimpt mich wunder wie daz werck abgangen sÿe / ob Adelberg mitt dem druken für far / Gott gäbe zů Allen theilen vil Glük Amen . ich weiss vff dissmal Nütt nüws zů schrÿben / sonder wellind mir eüwer beid vetteren / vnd Efersÿn / vnd Mathÿs gÿger / mÿn gvatter Bartlj / herr Doctor Joder / H : Doctor Samuel vast grüssen / wañ ir wol der wÿl hand etc. Hiemitt beuil ich eüwer Erwürd jnn Schirm Gottess Almechtigen Amen.

Actum den 24 tag October A° 1578.

A : E : E : dienstwilliger
JACOB CLAUSER Maler
zu Mülhusen jm pfrundhuss.

Ich hab vō Mülhusen mÿnem Bruder gen Zürich gschriben dess holbeinischen Angsichts halb / bin altag dess botten wartten daz er mir antwort bring.

MARGINAL NOTE
FROM A LETTER FROM JACOB CLAUSER TO BASILIUS AMERBACH
G II 16. Fol. 166 (October 25th, 1578)

Ich han gmeint ich hab eüch / ein tag vor disem brief gschriben den ich noch bÿhanden / so hab ichs gweñdt dan ich jn nitt funden / ess hatt mir nitt droumbtt / eb ich diss wortt vssgschriben ist er mir worden vnd aber daz buch erasmj wirtt mir / dañ ers nach ein mal gseit ess müss mir werden / er schrÿb druss wass her Oswald Meconj drÿ gschriben hatt.

LETTER FROM JACOB CLAUSER TO BASILIUS AMERBACH
G II 16. Fol. 167 ff. (November 14th, 1578)

Mÿn früntlichen grůss mit erbiettung schuldiger pflichtt vnd Als gůtz zu vor an. Erwürdiger vnd günstiger lieber Herr Doctor / ess verlangtt mich seer zu eüch / vnd ist mÿn meÿnung vnd vorhabens / nitt solang / vss zuverblÿben jnn welchen Acten / vnd vrsachen ichs nitt anders machen khönnen / wüss Gott / michs gar Melancolisch vnd bekhümertt gmacht hatt / vnd hette sonst gnůg

an mÿner krankheitt geheptt / Gott lob ess vmb ettwass besser worden wan̄ aber ein wenig bstendig wetter were / so woltt ich bald bÿ eüch sÿn / vnd wan ich schon nie khrank gsÿn were / so soltt ich von khum̄er khrank werden / Als mir die Herren zu Mülhusen / 32 mass gůtz öls khoufftt hand / ein jede Mass zu 10 ß / daz ist grechtt vnd gůtt gsÿn welliches ich alless mitt nutz verbruchtt hab / vnd aber ietz zu dem aller letsten hab ich meer bedörffen / daz selbig jnen angetzeigtt / sind sÿ vnbeschwärtt vnd gůtt willig / alle zÿtt / jn allem wass zu der sach dientt hatt gwäsen mich ouch verthröst ander / oder meer / gůtt öl / zu zestellen nitt weiss ich ob sÿ der wölfle nach khouffen wöllen / old nit / ie das sÿ für 3 guldj(n) khoufftt hand / vnd ich nitt gwüst wie thür die mass oder wie fil / dan ich alzÿtt so vil ich vff ein Mal bedörffen / vff dem Raht Huss gholt hab ich nitt vermeintt / daz dem öll Etwass brest oder nitt grechtt / sonder mich gfröuwtt wil ich uff dem letsten grüst / daz selbig fürderlich zu End bringen / hab ich damitt gölthrenktt / glÿch als vor / wüsse Gott daz mir mÿn läben lang nie khein sölch schädlich öl fürkhom̄en ist dan der gutt Herr Burger Meister selbs nütt darfür khan / ess sÿ dan̄ sach daz er der wolfle nach gfaren ich wett für mich selbs / sÿ Etwas Namhaftig schaden han / das ich nie bruchtt hett / wass ich daruff Malen daz wil nitt schnell drochnen / so khompt dan daz vngstü(m) wetter / vnd flöst mir durch einander / daz ich bald alless hoff ich mitt mund ertzellen will / die lütt die ietz Nussöl feil hand / die vermeÿnend mā wöls jm dügel / brennen / vnd thund Schwÿne schmalz darunder damitt bin ich / vnd die herren bethrogen worden / ich woltt eüch sonst langest ein Mass oder 12 khoufftt han / vnd ist mÿn Raht ir sollend kheinss khouffen biss ich selb zu eüch khom̄ / dan ich khans ietz Probieren / zu dem wil ich wol zu khander überkhom̄en / durch ein gutten fründ / damitt wir nitt an ein stok farind Dennoch lieber Herr Doctor wüssend daz der Herr Daniel überfeld ist / aber ich khurtzlich bÿ jm / vnd er dess Buchs halb gutt willig wan ich nitt so gar khrank gsÿn were / so wolt ichs langest han / wan er drunckhen ist / gadtman nitt gern mitt jm heim / aber sind on sorg ich wils nitt dahinden lossen etc. Wÿtter lieber Herr Doctor ess hatt mir mÿn Bruder Christoffel vss Rom gschriben / Erstlichs wie er von Basel gscheiden den Nächsten uff Luzern zu / vnd sÿe er uff den 13 tag Augsten mitt sÿnem dochterman / vnd zweÿen sÿner döchteren / eine ledig gwesen / vff Rom zu / vnd am 13 tag September jn Rom mitt gsuntheitt und fröuwden khom̄en Got habe lob. vnd am 3 tag wÿnmonet / hatt er die ledige dochter verhürahtet zu Rom / durch Raht sÿns dochtermans mitt einem Gwardjkhnechtt / vnd Rümptt mir sÿn wasserkhunst / werd jm zu Rom vil geltten . vnd ich vnd vnser schwäger einer von Zürich / denk ietz zu basel gwesen / sollind beÿd gwaltt haben mitt Ringler zu handlen / nitt weiss ich wass jnn mÿnen Namen vsgricht dan ich dem wetzel früntlich gschriben. Er schribtt mir er sÿe zu Bolonien zwen tag stil glegen vnd ist Danie Buchwald ein Golschmit von Basel bÿ jm gsÿn / vnd Etlich Züricher habend jm gutte gselschaft ghaltten / vnd sÿe ich vnd Mathÿs Gÿger ouch bÿ jnen gsÿn bÿ guttem wÿn / die Maler vnd alle handwerh wass dütsch sÿe / die üd ettwass khönn / die werdind jnn Rom lieb vnd werd ghaltten vnd wol betzaltt. Er schrÿbtt mir

ich soll alles verkhouffen wass ich hab vnd sol zum erst vff Bolonien ziehen / vnd darnach vff Rom / da werd ich ettwass sähen / es sÿe jn dütschland alss Bettelwerch / er vermeintt jn khurtzer zÿtt wölle er zu grossem gutt khom̄en wan jnn Gott gsund lasse. Er schrÿbtt mir wie ich eüch früntlich grüssen soll / vnd ouch danken der vilfaltigen gutdatten / Gott wölle jm gnad verlÿhen daz erss verdiene. Sÿns briefs dattum ist gschriben den 12 October, vff dissmal weiss ich nüdt Dan grüssend mirs alless. Gott wolle eüch jn Gsuntheit erhaltten Amen.

Actum den 14 Nouember A° 1578

A : Eüwer Dienstwilliger

JACOB CLAUSER Maler bim liecht jm

pfrundhuss.

LIST

OF HOLBEIN'S DRAWINGS AND OF THE MORE IMPORTANT NOTES BY MYCONIUS

The sketches are executed as far as Page 129 (R, Fig. 55), with few exceptions, in the same brown ink as that used by Myconius. The exceptions, which are in black, are all indicated (black) in the column between the folio number and the number of the picture. All the later pictures, Figs. 56–82, are in black. The signatures lacking in the original are here indicated in ( ).

Page	Signature			
1.	A			Title, enclosed in a border by Urs Graf. Above, the note by Myconius to the effect that the drawings were finished in ten days and that Erasmus was pleased.
2.	(A verso)			Lister's dedication to Johannes Paludanus.
3.	A 2			Erasmus' dedication to Thomas More. Short summary in Myconius' handwriting.
4.	(A 2 v)			*After this the signatures B v, B 2 v, etc., are no longer indicated.*
5.	A 3			
6.	(A 3 v)			
7.	(A 4)			
8.	(A 4 v)			
				Text begins, also marginal drawings.
9.	B		Fig. 1.	Folly (Moria) preaching to the multitude.
10.				
11.	B 2		Fig. 2.	The sophist walking on thorns (tribulations).
12.				
13.	B 3	(black)	Fig. 3.	Erasmus goes a-courting. (The wise man who turns to look at a pretty woman, walking into the market woman's egg basket.)
14.			Fig. 4.	Midas with his asses' ears.
15.	(B 4)			
16.				
17.	C			
18.		(black)	Fig. 5.	The two nurses of Folly, Methe and Apaidia.
19.	C 2			
20.		(black)	Fig. 6.	The stoic, a bearded dignitary, seeking a maiden's favor.
21.	C 3			
22.			Fig. 7.	The goat Amalthea, suckling the boy Jupiter; refers to the words fol. C below and C v above.
23.	(C 4)			
24.			Fig. 8.	The Brabanter, a fool, relishing a sausage.
25.	D			
26.			Fig. 9.	Bacchus in the grape arbor.
27.	D 2			
28.		(black)	Fig. 10.	Dance of Polyphemus with a satyr and Pan.
29.	D 3			
30.				
31.	(D 4)		Fig. 11.	The follies of sensual pleasure. The girl offering her breast to her lover.
32.				
33.	E			
34.				
35.	E 2		Fig. 12.	The deceived husband. A man with cock's feathers in his cap, listening to a cuckoo.

Page	Signature		
36.	(E 2 v)		Fig. 13. The fool, admiring himself in a mirror.
37.	E 3		
38.			
39.	(E 4)		
40.			Fig. 14. Marcus Aurelius with a child, his son, the future Emperor Commodus, dressed as a fool.
41.	F		
42.			Fig. 15. Sertorius' allegory of the horses' tails.
43.	F 2		Fig. 16. The many-headed monster called the people. A man with many heads, standing on a globe.
44.			
45.	F 3		
46.			
47.	(F 4)		
48.		(black)	Fig. 17. The wicked prince.
49.	G		
50.			
51.	G 2		
52.			
53.	G 3		Fig. 18. The eternal suitor.
54.			Fig. 19. The eager old woman.
55.	(G 4)		
56.			
57.	H		
58.			Fig. 20. The physician inspecting a basket as if he could make a diagnosis from it.
59.	H 2		Note by Myconius on the disturbance created when Glareanus rode his horse into the College of Preceptors; **dated 1515.**
60.			
61.	H 3		
62.			Fig. 21. The joyous simpleton.
63.	(H 4)		Fig. 22. Emperor Maximilian with his fool. (The fool as the prince's delight.)
64.			
65.	I		Fig. 23. A woman beckoning to a fool. (The fool as the women's favorite.)
66.			
67.	I 2		
68.			
69.	I 3		
70.			Fig. 24. The pleasures of the chase; the stag hunt.
71.	(I 4)		Myconius' story of the attack on his schoolhouse **on Dec. 29, 1515.**
72.			Fig. 25. Two dice players (the passion for gambling). Continuation of Myconius' narrative.
73.	K		Fig. 26. The fool praying to a picture of Saint Christopher.
74.			
75.	K 2		
76.			Fig. 27. Saint Bernard and the devil.
77.	K 3		
78.			
79.	(K 4)		Fig. 28. The numskull who is proud of his noble descent. A young nobleman wearing a gold chain and holding a falcon on his wrist.
80.			Fig. 29. A fool admiring his puppets. (Every fool likes his own folly.)
81.	L		
82.			Fig. 30. The religion of the Turks and of the Jews.
83.	L 2		
84.			Fig. 31. The two mules scratching each other's backs.
85.	L 3		
86.			Fig. 32. Apelles at his easel painting his Venus Anadyomene.
87.	(L 4)		
88.			

Page	Signature		
89.	M		Fig. 33. Zeus scourging Ate before casting her out of Olympus.
90.		(black)	Fig. 34. The women lighting candles to the Virgin.
91.	M 2		A note by Myconius **from his days in Zurich** about a preacher whom he heard in 1515 in Basle.
92.			
93.	M 3		Fig. 35. The sleeper.
94.			
95.	(M 4)		Fig. 36. The pilgrim.
96.			Fig. 37. The flogging school tyrant.
97.	N		
98.			Fig. 38. The poet. Note: *Glareanus hic pictus.*
99.	N 2		
100.			
101.	N 3		
102.			Fig. 39. The lawyer. Note by Myconius on a conversation with Lister; **dated 1515.**
103.	(N 4)		Fig. 40. The philosopher – *The more finely executed drawings begin here.*
104.			Fig. 41. The mathematician (astrologer).
			Fig. 42. The theologian.
105.	O		
106.			Fig. 43. Vulcan's couch.
107.	O 2		
108.			
109.	O 3		
110.			Note by Myconius on Duns Scotus; **dated 1515.**
111.	(O 4)		Fig. 44. Christ with His hand raised in blessing.
112.			
113.	P		Fig. 45. Penelope at her loom as a symbol of scholasticism.
114.			Fig. 46. Atlas representing theology supporting the Church.
115.	P 2		Remark by Myconius on the opinion of the man of the people. Obviously theological subtleties; **dated Basle, 1516.**
116.			Fig. 47. Birth of Pallas Athene.
117.	P 3		Fig. 48. The monk with a folio. (The gabbling of psalms.)
118.			Fig. 49. The mendicant friar.
119.	(P 4)		Fig. 50. The monk embracing the girl but unwilling to touch the money (The monk as a petticoat-chaser). Note: *Gronovius hic pictus.*
120.			
121.	Q		Fig. 51. The monk with a paunch. (The monk as glutton.)
122.			
123.	Q 2		Fig. 52. Æneas and Cerberus. Note by Myconius; **dated 1516.** *End of the*
124.			*marginal notes by Myconius.*
125.	Q 3		
126.			Fig. 53. Apollo slaying the children of Niobe.
127.	(Q 4)		
128.			Fig. 54. The chimera.
129.	R		Fig. 55. The ass and the harpist.
130.		(black)	Fig. 56. The king. *The series of black drawings begins here.*
131.	R 2		
132.		(black)	Fig. 57. The courtier.
133.	R 3	(black)	Fig. 58. The bishop.
134.		(black)	Fig. 59. The cardinal.
135.	(R 4)	(black)	Fig. 60. The pope (Leo X).
136.		(black)	Fig. 61. The branding of the heretics (Fabricius).
137.	S		
138.		(black)	Fig. 62. A priest and a soldier.
139.	S 2		
140.		(black)	Fig. 63. The goddess of fortune emptying a bag of gold into a fool's lap.
141.	S 3	(black)	Fig. 64. Erasmus working at his desk. Above, anecdote by Myconius to show the impression made on Erasmus by this picture of him.

Page	Signature			
142.	(S 3 v)	(black)	Fig. 65.	The jewelled fop.
143.	(S 4)	(black)	Fig. 66.	A toper (a fat and shining pig) and his girl. Designated as Holbein by a later hand.
144.		(black)	Fig. 67.	Moria trying to absorb the soul of Duns Scotus.
145.	T	(black)	Fig. 68.	Jeremiah.
146.		(black)	Fig. 69.	Solomon in his royal robes.
147.	T 2			
148.		(black)	Fig. 70.	A fool, persuading Nicolas de Lyra.
149.	T 3			
150.		(black)	Fig. 71.	A theolog, playing a hand organ (Lyra).
151.	(T 4)			
152.				
153.	V	(black)	Fig. 72.	An Apostle in the sense of Nicolas de Lyra (Julius II) with a lance, a sword, a crossbow, and a cannon.
154.		(black)	Fig. 73.	The judges in a trial for heresy.
155.	V 2			
156.		(black)	Fig. 74.	Julius Cæsar as a friend of Antony, but distrustful of Brutus.
157.	V 3			
158.		(black)	Fig. 75.	John the Baptist pointing to the Lamb.
159.	(V 4)	(black)	Fig. 76.	Jehovah and Adam beside the tree of knowledge.
160.		(black)	Fig. 77.	David praying. (He acknowledges his folly.)
161.	X	(black)	Fig. 78.	The true Christian giving away his wealth.
162.				
163.	X 2	(black)	Fig. 79.	The pious pauper who abhors money.
164.		(black)	Fig. 80.	Saint Bernard with the ewer of oil.
165.	X 3			
166.		(black)	Fig. 81.	Saint Jerome in ecstacy.
167.	(X 4)	(black)	Fig. 82.	Folly descends from the pulpit.
168.				Froben's printer's mark, woodcut by Urs Graf.

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